

A BETTER
START

E Tīpu e Rea

Successful Learning

Research Outcomes and Impact

A Better Start is funded by the Ministry
of Business, Innovation and Employment



Successful Learning: Phase 1

Project 1:

Predicting
Literacy
Success

Project 2:

Year 1 Literacy
Approach

Project 3:

Emerging
bilinguals in a
digital world

Project 4:

Children with
developmental
disability

Vision Mātauranga

- 22 publications directly related to the projects from the first phase of funding

Doctoral Research

- Melissa Derby: Restoring Māori Literacy Narratives to Create Contemporary Stories of Success. Ko te kai a te rangatira he korero. Discussion is the food of chiefs.
- Leona Harris: The language environments of young emergent bilinguals growing up in a digital world
- Alice Kim: Determinants of learning success among Pacific children aged 6 years in New Zealand
- Saili Lemalu Aukuso: SAILI E MANU - Identifying the most effective strategies in early literacy learning of emergent bilingual learners in a multicultural New Zealand
- Nikita Gregory: Sharing Student Health Information with Teachers – Principles and Perceptions

A BETTER
START

ETipueRea

Determinants of learning success among Pacific children aged 6 years

Findings from the Pacific Island Families Study

A Better Start is funded by the Ministry
of Business, Innovation and Employment



Research Objectives

- Understanding what ‘educational success’ means from a Pacific perspective
- Analyses of different perceptions of educational success held by Pacific children, mothers, and teachers
- Predicting Pacific children’s English receptive vocabulary (RV) at age 6 years
- Ethnic-specific analyses of risk and protective factors for English RV skills at age 6 years

Main Findings and Implications

- Pacific children generally had positive self-perceptions of their own school work performance at age 6 years
- Some important factors for English RV skills:
 - Strong connections to both the New Zealand and Pacific cultures;
 - Healthy birthweight,
 - Age-expected early childhood development;
 - More lenient disciplinary methods;
 - Length of stay in New Zealand

Main Findings and Implications

- Different influences of the above factors across Pacific groups: Samoan, Tongan, Cook Islands, Other Pacific
- Cultural considerations important – Linguistic and cultural backgrounds matter in Pacific children’s early learning success!
- Strength-based approach important for Pacific children to continue to have strong academic self-concept

A BETTER
START

ETIpueRea

Tufulasi Taleni:

- Comment on importance of whānau engagement

A BETTER
START

E Tīpu e Rea

Year 1 Literacy Approach

Brigid McNeill

A Better Start is funded by the Ministry
of Business, Innovation and Employment

Host Institution

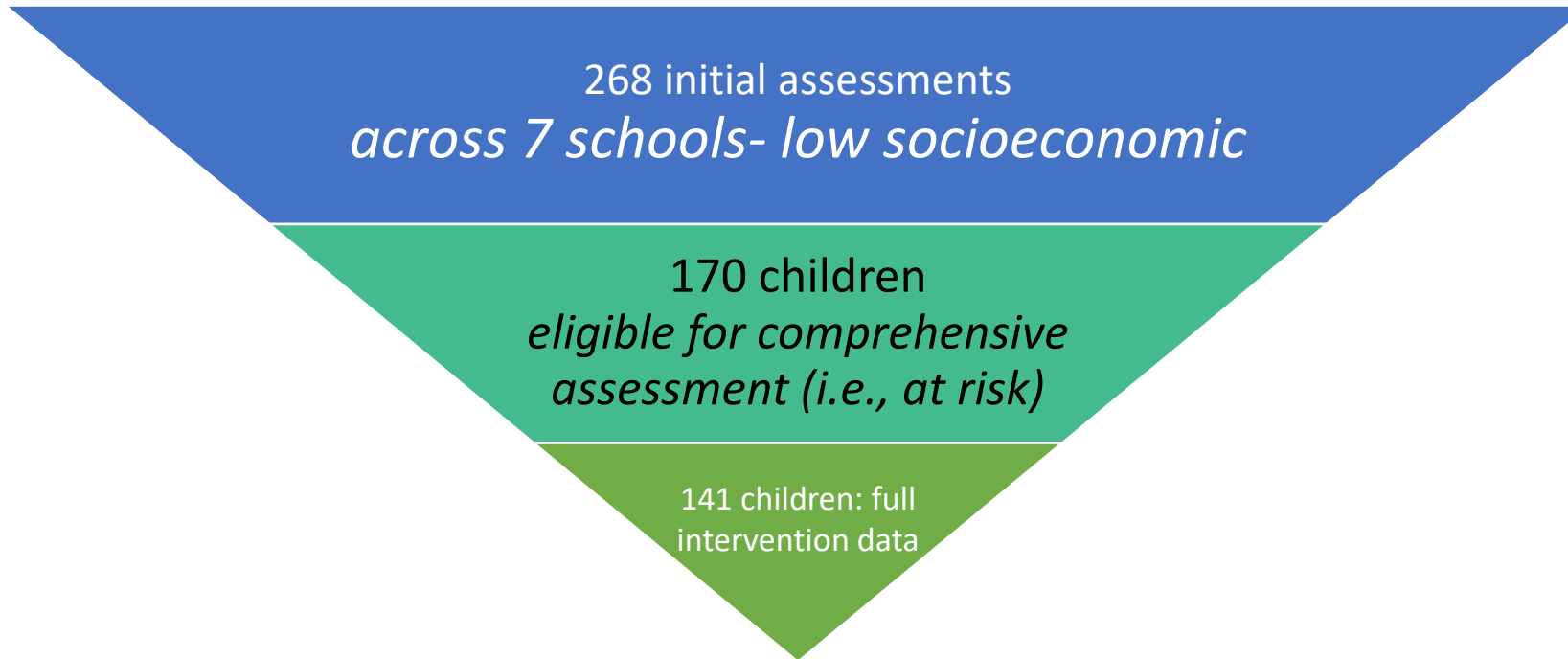


LIGGINS
INSTITUTE



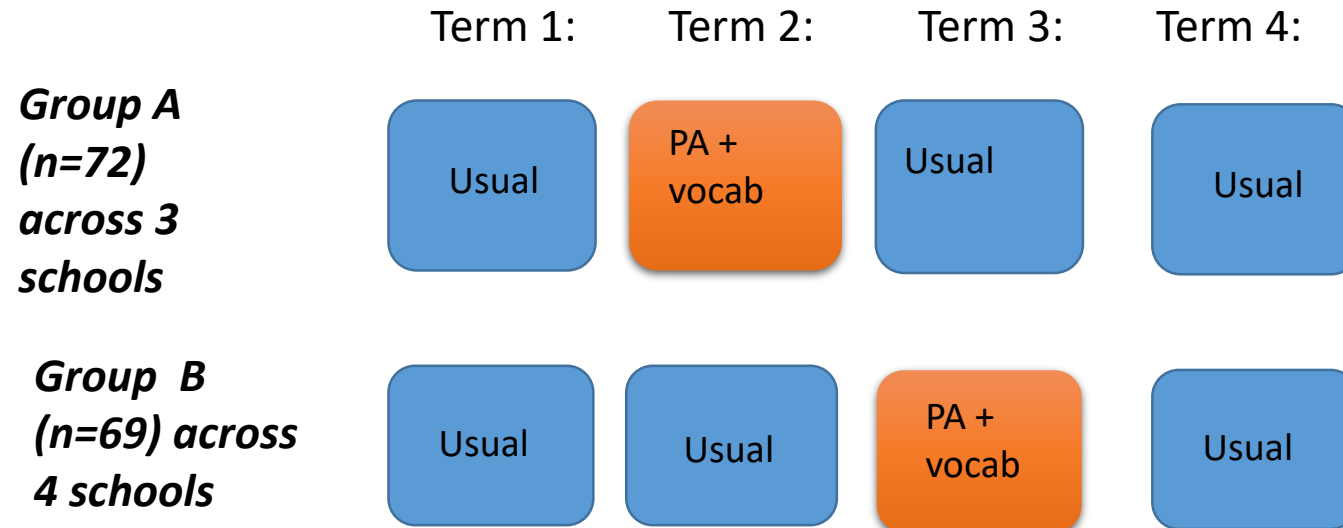
Better Start Literacy Study Participants

(Children Aged 5;0 – 5;11)



Response to intervention: 141 children with lower levels of oral language (**40** also had speech difficulties)

Stepped Wedge Research Design:



Intervention components

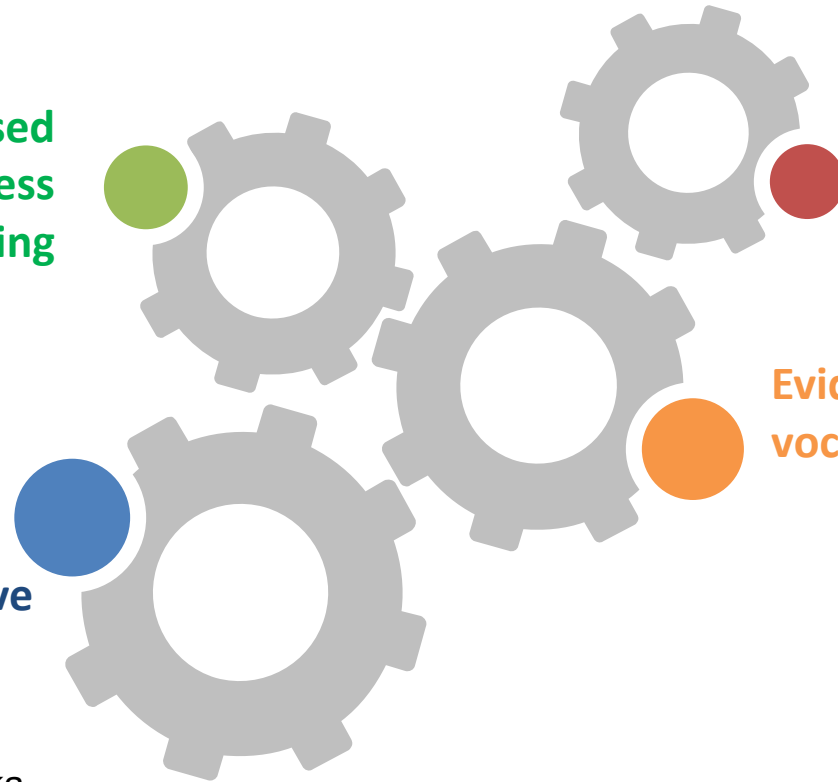
**Evidence-based
phonological awareness
teaching**

**Co-constructed with
class teachers**

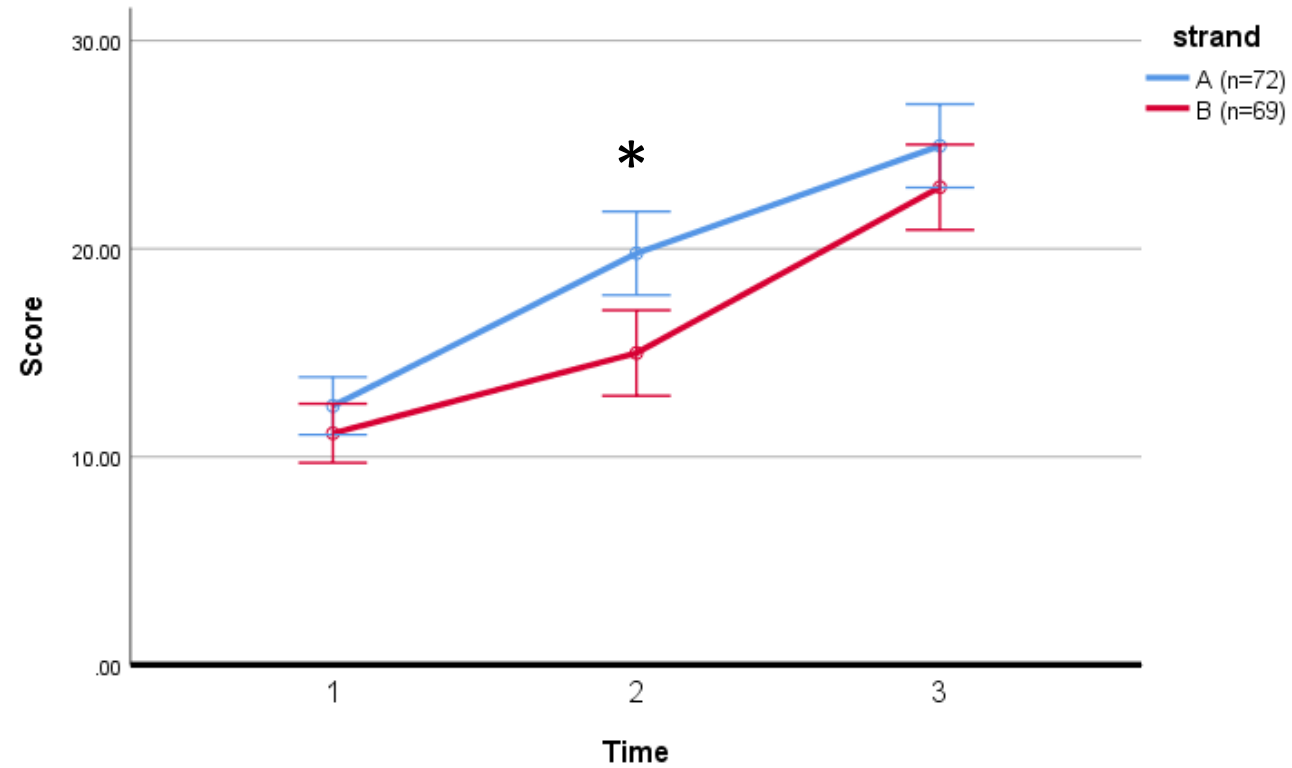
**Evidence based
vocabulary teaching**

Culturally responsive

Providing contexts for learning where the language, identity and culture of Māori and Pasifika learners and their family is affirmed..



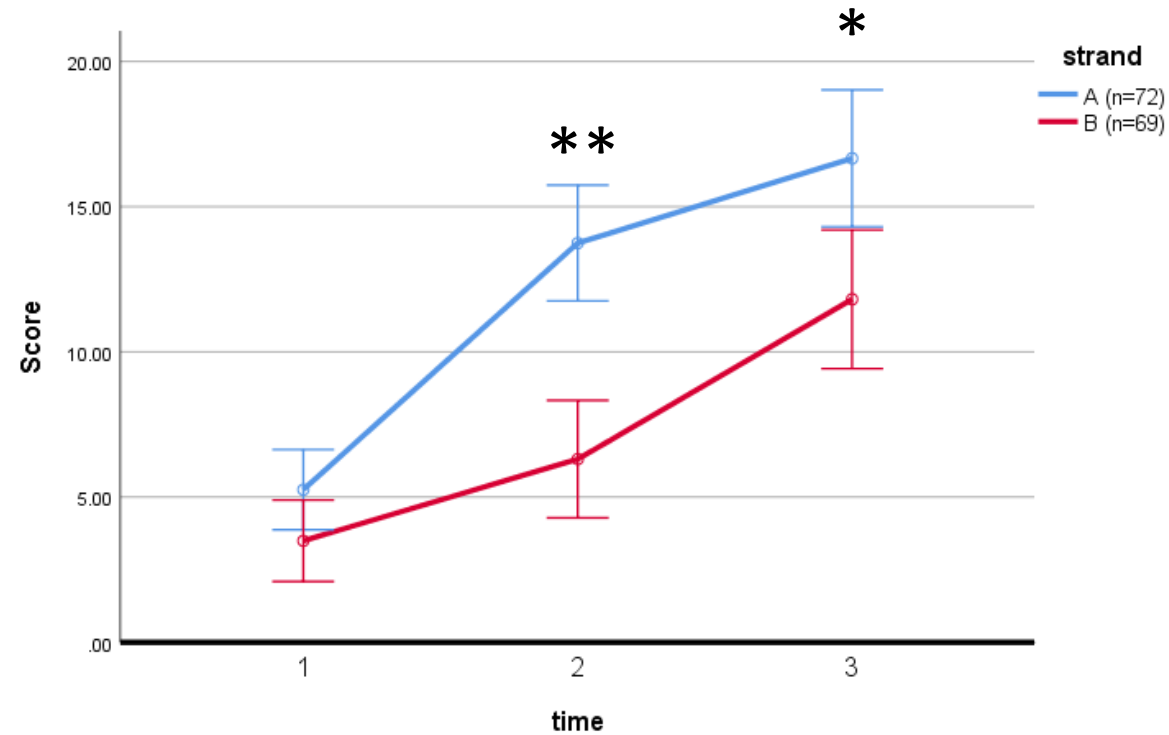
Phoneme Awareness



* $p < .05$, $d = 0.6$

Error bars: 95% CI

Word Decoding



** $p < .001$, $d = 0.87$; * $p < .05$, $d = 0.6$

Error bars: 95% CI

Results Summary

Significant Effects found for

- Phoneme segmentation
- Non word reading (transfer to print skills)
- Targeted Vocabulary

Nonsignificant effect found for

- Initial phoneme identity and letter knowledge

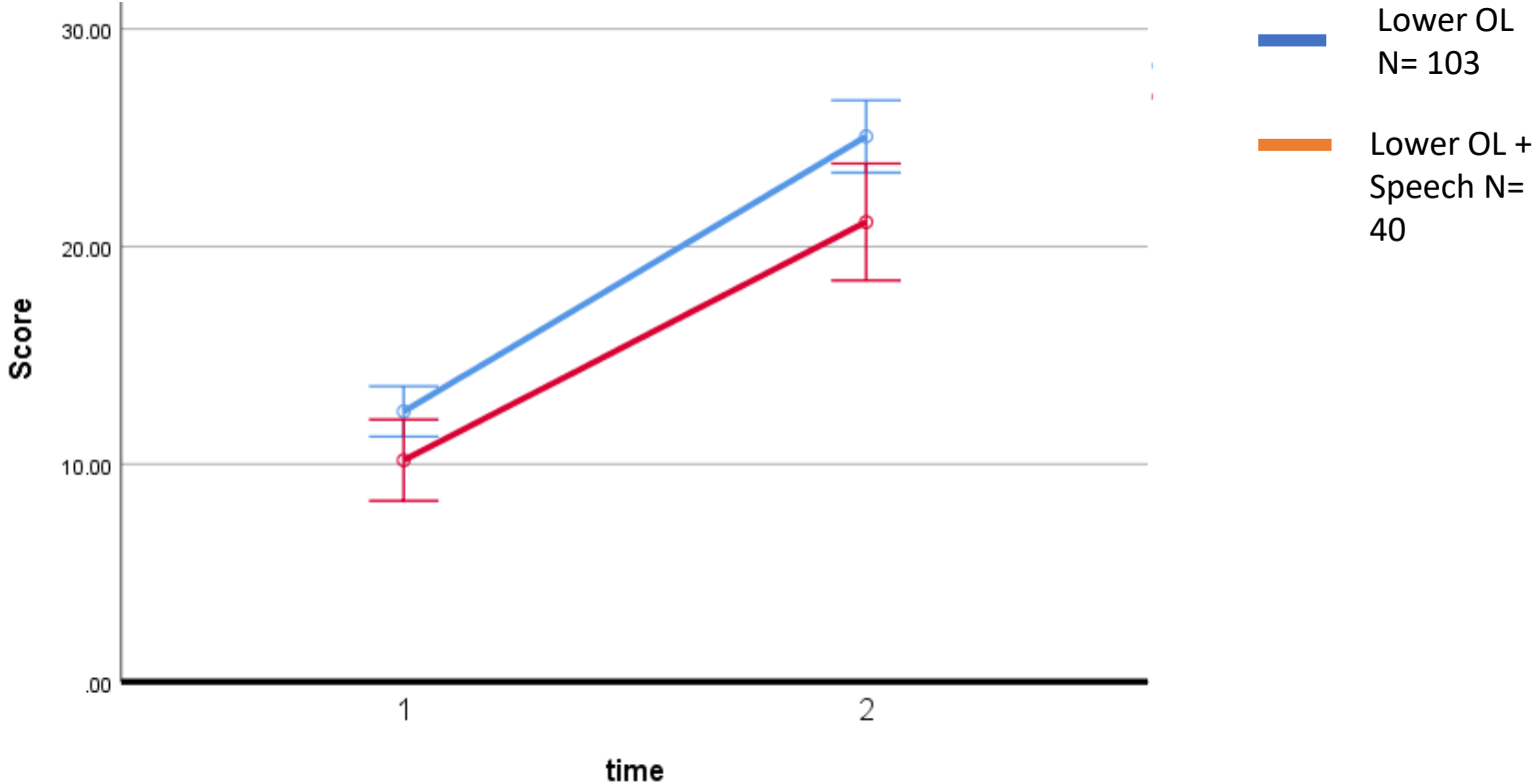
Pre Intervention

	Lower oral language	Lower oral language + speech difficulty
Sex	45 boys, 58 girls	26 boys, 14 girls
Age	64.6 (3.5)	64.5 (2.6)
CELF Core Language Index ¹	84.3 (16.7)	81.8 (14.9)
Letter-sound knowledge*	11.0 (5.3)	8.2 (5.5)
Phonological awareness*	12.4 (6.4)	9.9 (4.5)
Non-word reading (graphemes correct)	4.8 (6.3)	3.3 (4.5)
Vocabulary intervention probes	14.6 (5.1)	13.2 (3.4)

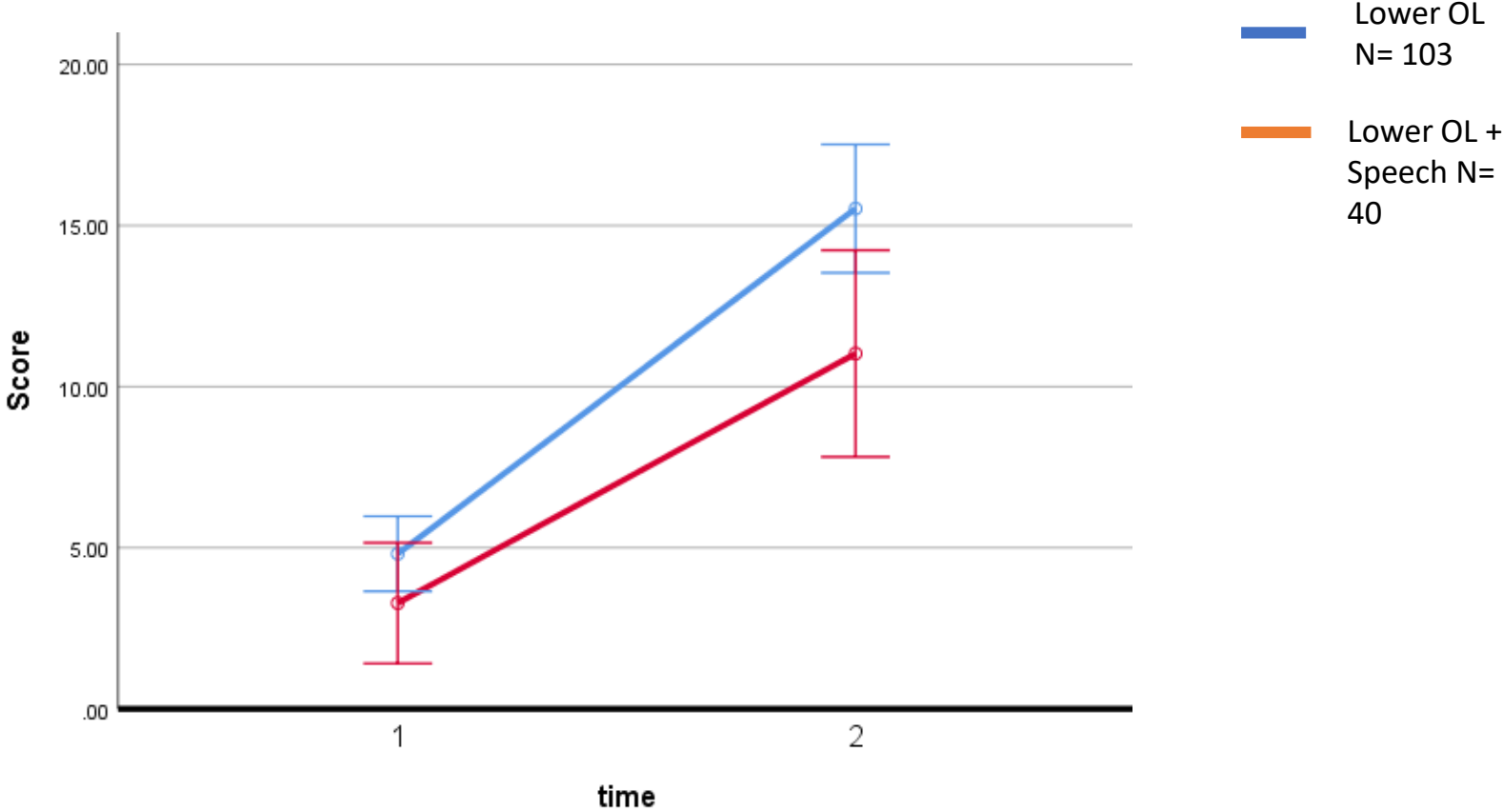
* Significant difference at $p < .05$ level

Lower oral language with and without speech difficulty

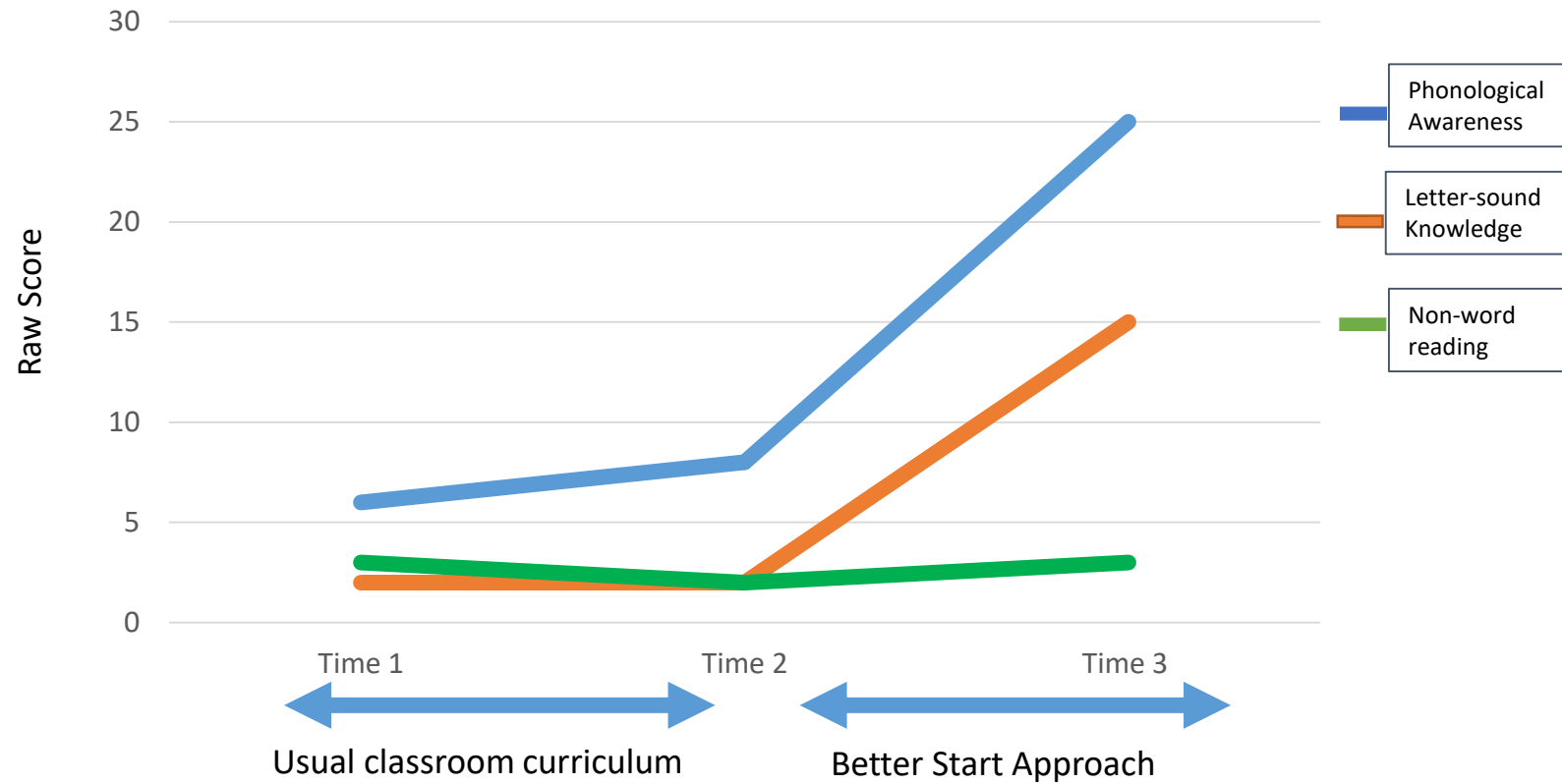
Phoneme awareness



Lower oral language with and without Speech Difficulty Decoding (phonemes correct)



Case Example: Leo's Response to Classwide Teaching



Key Findings

- 45% of the children with lower oral language skills do not require any further specific support at this stage following the class intervention
- Phoneme segmentation, blending, manipulation skills and vocabulary skills require more targeted instruction for children with lower oral language skills than observed in typical new entrant class language programmes.
- Transfer of improved PA knowledge to early reading and writing tasks was evident from class level instruction for children who entered the study with lower levels of oral language (This finding has not typically been observed in previous studies).

A BETTER
START

ETipueRea

Successful Learning

Looking towards the next five years

A Better Start is funded by the Ministry
of Business, Innovation and Employment

Host Institution



LIGGINS
INSTITUTE



Future Directions

- Re-focus on younger children (3 – 6 years) and integrating learning success and building children’s resilience
 - Efficient word learning by enhancing underlying cognitive ability
 - Exploring potentially bidirectional impact of accelerated word learning on aspects of children’s growing resilience and mental well-being (self-regulation and their self-learner perceptions).
 - Whānau based and teacher based support
- Key focus on biliteracy development (Te Reo Māori and Samoan)
 - From early childhood to early schooling (oral to written language)
 - Benefits of bilingualism for cognitive development, cultural identity and resilience

Acknowledgements

This research forms part of the National Science Challenge: A Better Start,
funded by the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE)
[Grant number 15-02688]



LIGGINS
INSTITUTE

