



Improving Early Reading Skills Through Picture Storybook-Based Learning

Albertin^{1*}, Agus Basuki²

Corresponding Author's e-mail: albertin.2025@student.uny.ac.id

Article History

Manuscript submitted:
15 April 2026
Manuscript revised:
23 Mei 2026
Accepted for publication:
17 Juni 2026

Keywords

Beginning Reading Skills;
Classroom Action
Research;
Elementary School;
Picture Storybook Media

Abstract

This study aimed to: (1) describe the implementation of picture storybook media in beginning reading instruction for first-grade students at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan, and (2) examine the improvement of students' beginning reading skills through the use of this instructional media. The study was motivated by the low level of students' beginning reading skills, as indicated by an initial mean score of 61.50, with all students (100%) failing to achieve the Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) of 75. This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, consisting of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. The participants were six first-grade students at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan, East Kutai Regency, comprising three boys and three girls. The research was conducted over two cycles, with each cycle consisting of two meetings. Data were collected through beginning reading tests, classroom observations, and documentation, and were analyzed using descriptive quantitative techniques based on mean scores and classical learning mastery percentages. The findings revealed that the use of picture storybook media effectively improved students' beginning reading skills. The mean score increased from 61.50 in the pre-cycle to 80.00 at the end of Cycle II, while the classical learning mastery improved from 0.00% to 83.33%, exceeding the predetermined success criterion of at least 75%. Students' learning activities also improved substantially, from 50.00% (fair category) to 92.50% (very good category). Therefore, the use of picture storybook media was found to be effective in improving the beginning reading skills of first-grade elementary school students.

Copyright © 2025, The Author(s).

This is an open access article under the BY-NC-ND license



Contents

Abstract	1142
Introduction	1143
Methods.....	1144
Results and Discussions.....	1145
Conclusion.....	1152

¹ Master's Program in Special Education Faculty of Education Graduate School Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

² Master's Program in Special Education Faculty of Education Graduate School Yogyakarta State University, Yogyakarta, Indonesia

Introduction

Reading ability is a fundamental skill that serves as the foundation for students' academic success at the elementary school level. Through reading, students not only acquire information but also develop their thinking, language, and conceptual understanding across various learning domains. Mastery of reading during the early grades is an essential prerequisite for students' success in subsequent stages of education. Therefore, early reading instruction should be systematically designed to foster the optimal development of foundational literacy skills. Early reading refers to the initial stage of reading instruction, focusing on students' ability to recognize letters, associate written symbols with their corresponding sounds, read syllables and words, and eventually comprehend simple sentences. Success at this stage plays a crucial role in the development of more advanced reading proficiency. Students who have not mastered early reading skills often encounter difficulties in understanding learning materials across different subjects due to their limited ability to access written information. Consequently, teachers need instructional strategies that are aligned with the developmental characteristics of young learners in the early grades.

From a developmental perspective, first-grade elementary students are in the concrete operational stage, making them more receptive to information presented through visual media than to abstract text. In addition, young learners generally have relatively short attention spans; therefore, monotonous instructional approaches tend to reduce their motivation and engagement in the learning process. These characteristics require teachers to employ instructional media that are engaging, contextualized, and developmentally appropriate to facilitate effective early reading instruction. Preliminary observations conducted at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan revealed that the early reading skills of first-grade students remained relatively low. The students' average reading score at the baseline assessment was only 61.50, and none of the students (100%) met the Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) of 75. The students experienced difficulties in letter recognition, syllable reading, reading fluency, and self-confidence when asked to read aloud in front of the class. These challenges were further exacerbated by students' low interest in reading, the predominance of teacher-centered instructional methods, and the limited use of learning media capable of attracting students' attention.

One instructional medium with considerable potential to improve early reading skills is the picture storybook. This medium integrates written text with illustrations, enabling students to construct meaning through visual support. Engaging illustrations can enhance students' attention, learning motivation, and imagination while facilitating the association between written symbols and their meanings. Furthermore, picture storybook-based instruction promotes more active interaction between teachers and students, making the reading process more enjoyable and meaningful. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated the effectiveness of picture storybooks in improving early reading skills. A study by Sari and Wardani (2021) found that the use of picture storybooks significantly improved elementary school students' early reading abilities. Similarly, Fahyuni and Bandonio (2015) reported that illustrated story media enhanced both reading fluency and students' learning motivation. Consistent with these findings, Santhyami (2023) argued that visual media effectively increase reading interest among early-grade students, while Islamiyah et al. (2022) emphasized that reading instruction requires engaging strategies to encourage students' active participation. More recent studies conducted by Hermalia and Nurhabibah (2025), Ramadanu et al.

(2023), and Ali and Asrial (2022) likewise concluded that image-based instructional media make a positive contribution to improving students' reading skills and classroom engagement.

Despite these findings, classroom observations indicated that the use of picture storybooks at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan had not been implemented optimally. Teachers continued to rely primarily on conventional instructional methods, providing students with limited opportunities to experience engaging and meaningful learning activities. This situation reveals a gap between previous research demonstrating the effectiveness of picture storybooks and the instructional practices currently implemented in the classroom. Addressing this gap provides a strong rationale for conducting classroom action research aimed at improving the quality of early reading instruction. Based on these issues, this study aims to describe the implementation of picture storybook-based instruction in early reading lessons and to analyze the improvement of first-grade students' early reading skills at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan following the implementation of this instructional medium. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for teachers in developing more effective reading instruction while contributing to the growing body of literature on the use of visual media to enhance foundational literacy among elementary school students.

Methods

This study employed Classroom Action Research (CAR) based on the spiral model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart, which consists of four stages: planning, action, observation, and reflection. CAR was selected because it aims to improve the quality of the instructional process while enhancing students' early reading skills through the implementation of picture storybook-based instruction. The study was conducted collaboratively over two cycles, with each cycle comprising two instructional meetings. The reflection results from each cycle served as the basis for refining the instructional strategies implemented in the subsequent cycle until the predetermined success indicators were achieved. This research design enabled the teacher to improve instructional practices systematically, continuously, and in response to authentic classroom problems (Kemmis et al., 2014; Mu'alimin, 2014; Saur, 2014).

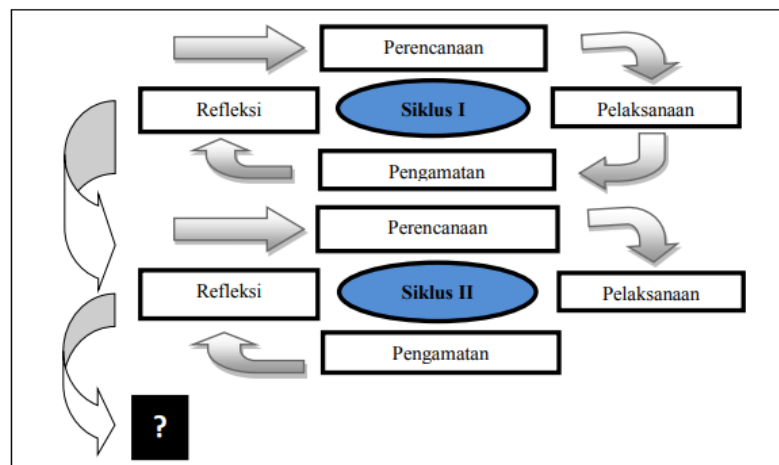


Figure 1. Classroom Action Research Design Based on the Kemmis and McTaggart Model

The study was conducted during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan, East Kutai Regency, East Kalimantan, Indonesia. The participants consisted of 20

first-grade students, including 11 girls and 9 boys. Based on the preliminary assessment, six students were identified as experiencing difficulties in early reading and therefore became the primary focus of the intervention. Data were collected through reading tests, classroom observations, and documentation. The reading test was administered to assess students' early reading skills based on four aspects: pronunciation, intonation, reading fluency, and vocal clarity. Classroom observations were conducted to evaluate both teacher and student activities throughout the instructional process. Quantitative data were analyzed descriptively by calculating the class mean score and the percentage of students achieving mastery learning, whereas qualitative data were analyzed using the stages of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. The study was considered successful when at least 75% of the students achieved the Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) score of 75 and demonstrated increased learning engagement throughout the instructional process.

Results and Discussion

1. Baseline Condition

This classroom action research was conducted at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan during the second semester of the 2025/2026 academic year. Prior to implementing the intervention, the researcher coordinated with the school principal to obtain research permission and conducted preliminary classroom observations. These observations aimed to identify problems related to students' early reading skills. The findings revealed that several students still experienced difficulties in recognizing letters, reading syllables and simple words, and demonstrating confidence when asked to read aloud in front of the class. These findings indicated that students' early reading abilities required further attention and improvement through instructional approaches that were more engaging and better suited to the developmental characteristics of elementary school learners.

The research subjects consisted of six first-grade students identified as experiencing difficulties in early reading, including two girls (AR and RT) and four boys (ARF, SD, WR, and GB). These six students were selected because they had not yet achieved fluent reading, whereas the remaining students demonstrated relatively adequate reading proficiency. Before the intervention was implemented, all research participants completed an oral early reading assessment to establish baseline data that would serve as the foundation for planning the instructional interventions in each research cycle. The baseline assessment revealed that the students' early reading skills were still at a moderate level, with a mean score of 61.50. None of the students achieved the Minimum Learning Achievement Criteria (KKTP) of 75, resulting in a classical mastery rate of 0%, indicating that all students had not yet met the expected learning outcomes. The highest score obtained was 67, while the lowest was 54. These results indicate that the students continued to experience difficulties in pronunciation, intonation, reading fluency, and vocal clarity, highlighting the need for an instructional intervention capable of improving their reading skills progressively.

The low level of early reading proficiency observed during the baseline condition was influenced by several factors, including the continued use of conventional teaching methods, the limited utilization of engaging instructional media, and the lack of visual stimulation to help students understand the relationships among letters, sounds, and meaning. Moreover, the predominantly monotonous instructional approach caused students to lose interest quickly and reduced their motivation to practice reading. These findings provided the rationale for implementing picture storybook-based instruction as an intervention to improve students' early reading skills in a more effective, engaging, and enjoyable manner.

2. Description of Cycle I

During the first meeting of Cycle I, the learning process was implemented according to the stages outlined in the lesson plan by utilizing a picture storybook entitled *My School*. During the planning stage, the researcher prepared the lesson plan, instructional materials on the school environment, the picture storybook, student worksheets (LKPD), observation sheets, and an early reading assessment instrument. All instructional materials were designed to support the implementation of the intervention, which aimed to improve students' early reading skills through a more engaging and interactive learning experience.

The implementation began with introductory activities, including greeting the students, praying together, checking attendance, explaining the learning objectives, and introducing the instructional media. In the main learning activities, the teacher introduced the alphabet using the whiteboard and guided students in pronouncing each letter with correct pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and clarity. Students then observed pictures related to the school environment as an apperception activity before reading the picture storybook. The teacher read the story aloud slowly while showing the illustrations on each page. Subsequently, the students were asked to read the text together, followed by group reading and individual reading activities. After the reading session, students discussed the content of the story and completed the student worksheets collaboratively under the teacher's guidance. At the end of the lesson, the teacher provided reinforcement, motivation, and facilitated a reflection session with the students on the learning activities that had been completed.

Throughout the learning process, it was observed that most students still required intensive guidance during reading activities. At the beginning of the lesson, several students appeared uninterested, became easily bored, and lacked the confidence to read aloud in front of the class. However, after the teacher provided encouragement, individual assistance, and utilized an engaging picture storybook, some students began to show greater interest and became more willing to participate in reading activities, although they still appeared hesitant. These findings indicate that the instructional media succeeded in attracting students' interest in learning, although the results had not yet reached the expected level.

The observation results from the first meeting showed that students' learning activities had improved compared to the pre-intervention condition, although they were still categorized as fair. The percentage of student learning activity reached 50%, indicating that student participation had not yet been optimal. Several aspects requiring further improvement included students' confidence in reading aloud, their ability to imitate the teacher's pronunciation and intonation, their ability to reread the story independently or in groups, and their ability to summarize the reading passage. Conversely, students demonstrated progress in terms of their readiness to participate in learning activities, their attention to the instructional media, and their responsiveness to the teacher's instructions throughout the lesson.

Table 1. Improvement in Students' Early Reading Skills during Cycle I, Meeting 1

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
1	AR	67	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
2	RT	73	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
3	ARF	75	Good	Achieved
4	SD	70	Fair	Not Yet Achieved

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
5	WR	70	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
6	GB	67	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
Average		70.33	Fair	Achieved: 1 student (16.7%); Not Yet Achieved: 5 students (83.3%)
Number of students achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				1 Siswa
Number of students not achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				5 Siswa
Percentage of KKTP achievement				16.67%

Based on Table 1, it can be concluded that the students' early reading skills remained relatively low. Nevertheless, improvement was observed compared to the initial condition due to the guidance provided by the researcher, which helped address students' weaknesses in early reading by focusing greater attention on those who experienced difficulties in letter recognition and reading. These findings indicate that the intervention began to produce positive effects, although the expected level of mastery had not yet been achieved. During the second meeting of Cycle I, the instructional activities were conducted based on reflections from the previous meeting by providing more intensive assistance to the six students who continued to experience reading difficulties. The teacher utilized a picture storybook entitled *The Environment Around My Home* and provided students with more opportunities to practice reading individually. Throughout the lesson, the teacher gave immediate corrective feedback on students' pronunciation, intonation, fluency, and voice clarity, while also providing reinforcement and motivation to increase their confidence.

The observation results indicated further improvement in students' learning activities compared to the first meeting, with a participation rate of **65%**, which remained within the **fair** category. Students became more accustomed to using picture storybooks, showed greater enthusiasm during learning activities, and demonstrated improvements in paying attention to the teacher's explanations, observing illustrations, and participating in reading and discussion activities. Nevertheless, several students still experienced difficulties in reading fluently, applying appropriate intonation, and reading with clear articulation. The evaluation of students' early reading skills also showed improvement compared to the first meeting. However, the percentage of students achieving mastery had not yet reached the predetermined success criterion. Therefore, based on the reflection results, it was concluded that the intervention implemented in Cycle I had produced positive progress but still required further refinement in Cycle II through more intensive individual reading practice, more focused feedback, and more effective use of picture storybooks to further improve students' early reading skills.

Table 2. Improvement in Students' Early Reading Skills during Cycle I, Meeting 2

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
1	AR	70	Fair	Not Yet Achieved

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
2	RT	78	Good	Achieved
3	ARF	80	Good	Achieved
4	SD	72	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
5	WR	75	Good	Achieved
6	GB	67	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
Average		73.67	Fair	Achieved: 3 students (50%); Not Yet Achieved: 3 students (50%)
Number of students achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				3 students
Number of students not achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				3 students
Percentage of KKTP achievement				50%

Based on the evaluation conducted at the end of the second meeting of Cycle I, students' early reading skills showed a noticeable improvement compared to the previous meeting. The class mean score increased from 70.33 in the first meeting to 73.67 in the second meeting, representing an improvement of 3.34 points. Furthermore, the number of students who achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP) increased to three students (50%), namely RT, ARF, and WR, while the remaining three students (AR, SD, and GB) had not yet reached the required level of mastery. These findings indicate that the use of picture storybooks began to have a positive impact on students' early reading skills, as reflected in improvements in pronunciation, reading fluency, and students' confidence when reading aloud in front of the class. However, the learning mastery rate of 50% remained below the research success criterion, which required at least 75% of students to achieve the KKTP. Therefore, the study proceeded to Cycle II, with several improvements planned, including more intensive individual reading practice, greater emphasis on pronunciation and intonation, and the use of a wider variety of picture storybooks to ensure that all students would achieve the expected learning outcomes.

3. Description of Cycle II

During the first meeting of Cycle II, the learning activities were implemented based on the reflections from the previous cycle by providing more intensive assistance to students who had not yet achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP). The teacher continued to use picture storybooks with themes related to activities at home and the surrounding environment. However, the instructional strategy was refined by increasing opportunities for individual reading practice, providing immediate feedback, and offering individualized guidance to students who continued to experience reading difficulties. In addition, students who had demonstrated stronger reading skills were

encouraged to assist their peers during group activities, thereby fostering a more collaborative learning environment.

Throughout the lesson, students appeared more enthusiastic, demonstrated greater confidence in reading aloud in front of the class, and participated more actively in observing illustrations, answering questions, and discussing the story content. The observation results indicated that the implementation of the first meeting of Cycle II showed a considerable improvement compared to the previous cycle. Student learning activity reached 80.00%, which was categorized as good, indicating that most students were able to participate effectively in every stage of the learning process according to the teacher's instructions. Students also became increasingly familiar with the use of picture storybooks, showed greater confidence in individual reading, and demonstrated improved collaboration with their peers during group work. Nevertheless, several students still required additional time to read fluently and comprehend the reading materials. Therefore, the reflection at the end of this meeting concluded that the intervention had produced positive progress; however, individualized reading practice and targeted guidance still needed to be continued during the following meeting to ensure that all students achieved the predetermined research success indicators.

Table 3. Improvement in Students' Early Reading Skills during Cycle II, Meeting 1

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
1	AR	73	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
2	RT	80	Good	Achieved
3	ARF	85	Very Good	Achieved
4	SD	75	Good	Achieved
5	WR	78	Good	Achieved
6	GB	70	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
Number of students achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				4 Students
Number of students not achieving the Learning Objective Achievement (KKTP)				2 Students
Class Average Score				76.83%
Percentage of KKTP achievement				66.67%

The evaluation results from the first meeting of Cycle II indicated a substantial improvement in students' early reading skills compared to the previous cycle. The class mean score increased to 76.83, which fell within the good category. Of the six students participating in the study, four successfully achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP). Specifically, RT obtained a score of 80, ARF 85, SD 75, and WR 78. Meanwhile, the remaining two students, AR and GB, obtained scores of 73 and 70, respectively, and had not yet met the mastery criterion. The percentage of

learning mastery increased to 66.67%, representing a notable improvement over the 50.00% achieved during the second meeting of Cycle I. This progress indicates that the revised instructional strategies—including individualized guidance, more intensive reading practice, and the more effective use of picture storybooks—had begun to produce positive effects on students' early reading skills.

During the second meeting of Cycle II, the learning activities focused on strengthening students' reading abilities through the continued use of picture storybooks while providing each student with greater opportunities to read independently. The teacher offered individualized support to students who continued to experience reading difficulties, particularly AR and GB, through step-by-step reading exercises and repeated word-by-word practice before progressing to complete sentence reading. The observation results demonstrated excellent progress, with student learning activities reaching 92.50%, which was categorized as very good. Students appeared more enthusiastic, actively engaged, and confident throughout the learning process. Their independent reading became more fluent, collaboration among group members improved, and nearly all students were able to read simple sentences with more accurate pronunciation, appropriate intonation, greater fluency, and clearer articulation. These findings indicate that the implementation of picture storybooks successfully created a more engaging learning environment while optimally enhancing students' early reading skills.

Table 4. Students' Early Reading Skills during Cycle II, Meeting 2

No.	Student	Score	Category	Remarks
1	AR	73	Fair	Not Yet Achieved
2	RT	80	Good	Achieved
3	ARF	85	Very Good	Achieved
4	SD	82	Very Good	Achieved
5	WR	82	Very Good	Achieved
6	GB	78	Good	Achieved
Number of students achieving the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)				5 Students
Number of students not achieving the Learning Objective Achievement (KKTP)				1 Students
Class Average Score				80%
Percentage of KKTP achievement				83.33%

Based on the evaluation conducted at the end of the second meeting of Cycle II, students' early reading skills showed a very substantial improvement. The class mean score reached 80.00, classified as good, representing an increase from 76.83 in the previous meeting. Of the six students who

participated in the study, five successfully achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP). RT obtained a score of 80, ARF 85, SD 82, WR 82, and GB 78. Only one student, AR, obtained a score of 73, which remained below the mastery criterion.

The percentage of learning mastery increased to 83.33%, exceeding the predetermined research success indicator, which required at least 75% of students to achieve the KKTP. These findings demonstrate that the implementation of picture storybooks was effective in improving the early reading skills of first-grade students. Since the research success indicators were achieved in terms of both the class average score and classical learning mastery, this Classroom Action Research was considered successful and, therefore, did not require continuation to a subsequent cycle.

4. Discussion

The research findings indicate that the implementation of picture storybooks progressively improved the early reading skills of first-grade students at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan throughout each action cycle. In the initial condition, students' early reading skills were relatively low, as reflected in a class mean score of 61.50 and a learning mastery rate of 0%. Following the implementation of the intervention across two learning cycles, the class mean score increased progressively to 70.33 in Cycle I Meeting 1, 73.67 in Cycle I Meeting 2, 76.83 in Cycle II Meeting 1, and ultimately reached 80.00 at the end of Cycle II. Similarly, the percentage of students achieving learning mastery consistently improved from 0% to 16.67%, 50.00%, 66.67%, and finally 83.33% at the conclusion of the study. These findings indicate that the predetermined research success criterion—namely, that at least 75% of students achieve the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP)—was successfully attained.

The improvement in students' learning outcomes was closely associated with the progressive refinement of the instructional process throughout each cycle. At the beginning of the intervention, most students demonstrated limited confidence, were reluctant to read aloud in front of the class, and participated less actively in classroom activities. However, as the teacher consistently incorporated picture storybooks featuring engaging illustrations, modeled appropriate reading techniques, provided individualized guidance, and offered positive reinforcement, students' learning engagement increased substantially. This improvement was reflected in the observation results, with student learning activity increasing from 50.00% in Cycle I Meeting 1 to 65.00% in Meeting 2, rising further to 80.00% in Cycle II Meeting 1, and ultimately reaching 92.50%, categorized as very good, at the end of Cycle II. These results demonstrate that the use of picture storybooks created a more active, enjoyable, and student-centered learning environment.

From a pedagogical perspective, picture storybooks provide learning experiences that are well aligned with the developmental characteristics of students in the early grades, who are generally in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development. The illustrations presented in the storybooks help students connect written symbols with familiar objects and events from their daily lives, thereby facilitating reading comprehension. Through activities such as observing illustrations, listening to the teacher read aloud, participating in shared reading, reading independently, engaging in group discussions, and completing worksheets, students were provided with repeated opportunities to practice reading in an enjoyable learning environment. Such instructional experiences effectively enhanced students' attention, motivation, and self-confidence during early reading instruction.

These findings are consistent with Gagné's theory, as cited in Sadiman (2009), which states that instructional media constitute an essential component of the learning environment capable of stimulating students' learning. The use of picture storybooks in this study proved effective in increasing student engagement by presenting learning materials in a more concrete and appealing

manner. Furthermore, Jumadil et al. (2025) argued that early reading media based on everyday-life contexts are particularly effective for elementary school students because they enable learners to relate instructional content to their real-life experiences. This perspective is consistent with the implementation of the present study, which employed familiar themes such as school and the surrounding environment, thereby enabling students to comprehend the reading materials more easily.

The findings also demonstrate that the use of picture storybooks not only enhanced students' reading abilities but also contributed positively to their psychological development. The six students who initially experienced reading difficulties gradually developed greater self-confidence after receiving individualized guidance and positive reinforcement from the teacher. As the intervention progressed, students became more willing to read aloud in front of the class, actively asked questions, and collaborated more effectively with their peers during group activities. These behavioral changes suggest that engaging and meaningful reading instruction can reduce students' anxiety and fear associated with learning to read.

These findings are consistent with those reported by Sari and Wardani (2021), who found that picture storybooks significantly improved the early reading skills of elementary school students. Likewise, Fahyuni and Bandoni (2015) concluded that illustrated story media enhanced reading fluency by providing students with repeated reading practice through contextualized texts. Similarly, Santhyami (2023) reported that visual media effectively increased reading interest among early-grade students, while Islamiyah et al. (2022) emphasized that reading instruction requires engaging and varied instructional strategies to promote active student participation. Furthermore, studies conducted by Annisa et al. (2025), Emila and Fajri (2025), and Safitri et al. (2025) also support the present findings by demonstrating that image-based instructional media improve students' learning motivation, active participation, and reading achievement in elementary schools.

Improvements in students' reading abilities were also evident across all assessed components, including pronunciation, intonation, reading fluency, and voice clarity. Prior to the intervention, most students read by spelling out individual letters, demonstrated inaccurate pronunciation, spoke with insufficient clarity, and used inappropriate intonation. After repeatedly participating in learning activities using picture storybooks, students became increasingly capable of reading words and simple sentences with more accurate pronunciation, improved intonation, greater reading fluency, and clearer articulation. The teacher's reading demonstrations, repeated individual practice, and immediate corrective feedback were identified as key factors contributing to these improvements.

Nevertheless, the findings revealed that one student had not yet achieved the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP) by the end of the study. This result indicates that students' reading development progresses at different rates. Nuraeni (2025) explained that early reading development is influenced by individual learner characteristics, meaning that each child requires a different amount of time to attain optimal reading proficiency. Therefore, teachers should continue to provide individualized support for students who experience reading difficulties to ensure that their early reading skills continue to develop.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this Classroom Action Research conducted over two cycles, it can be concluded that the implementation of picture storybooks was effective in improving the early reading skills of first-grade students at SDN 001 Teluk Pandan. The intervention was carried out through the stages of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The learning activities included

letter recognition, illustration observation, shared reading, individual reading, group discussions, as well as the provision of positive reinforcement and intensive guidance for students who experienced reading difficulties. The findings demonstrated consistent improvements in both the learning process and learning outcomes. Student learning activity increased from 50.00% during the first meeting of Cycle I to 92.50% by the end of Cycle II. Similarly, the mean score for students' early reading skills improved from 61.50 in the pre-cycle stage to 80.00 at the end of Cycle II. The percentage of students achieving learning mastery also increased substantially, from 0.00% to 83.33%, thereby exceeding the predetermined research success criterion that required at least 75% of students to achieve the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP).

Based on these findings, teachers are encouraged to integrate picture storybooks consistently into early reading instruction, as this instructional medium has been shown to enhance students' motivation, classroom engagement, and early reading skills. Schools are expected to support this effort by providing a diverse collection of picture storybooks and facilitating teachers' professional development in the use of innovative instructional media. Parents are also encouraged to play an active role in fostering their children's reading habits at home through shared reading activities and by providing age-appropriate reading materials. Finally, future researchers are encouraged to expand this line of inquiry by involving larger samples or by combining picture storybooks with other instructional models or teaching methods. Such studies may provide more comprehensive evidence regarding effective strategies for improving the early reading skills of elementary school students.

Acknowledgements

The researchers would like to express their sincere gratitude to the headteacher, classroom teacher, participating students, parents, and all staff of SDN 001 Teluk Pandan for their support and cooperation throughout this study. Appreciation is also extended to all parties who contributed to the implementation of picture storybooks and supported the improvement of early reading instruction for first-grade students.

References

- Ali, M., & Asrial, A. (2022). Peningkatan Kemampuan Membaca Peserta Didik Kelas II SDN 136/I Semangat Melalui Buku Cerita Bergambar. *Jurnal Tonggak Pendidikan Dasar: Jurnal Kajian Teori Dan Hasil Pendidikan Dasar*, 1(1), 1-8.
- Anggraini, H., & Susanti, D. (2025). Pengaruh Metode Bercerita terhadap Kemampuan Membaca Anak dengan Media Gambar. *Jurnal Studi Guru Dan Pembelajaran*, 8(1), 407-417.
- Annisa, R., Ramadani, F., & Haliq, A. (2025). Inovasi pembelajaran dengan media visual: Studi pengalaman di sekolah dasar. *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 10(02), 379-389.
- Arikunto, S. (2010). *Arikunto, Suharsimi. (1993). Prosedur Penelitian Suatu Pendekatan Praktik. Jakarta: PT. Rineka Cipta.*
- Burns, P. C., Roe, B. D., & Ross, E. P. (1984). *Teaching Reading in Today's Elementary Schools.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Emila, F. N., & Fajri, Z. (2025). Optimalisasi Penggunaan Buku Cerita Bergambar untuk Meningkatkan Minat Membaca Siswa MI. *Jurnal Ilmiah Profesi Pendidikan*, 10(2), 1399-1409.
- Farida Rahim. (2008). *Pengajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar.* Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Fahyuni, E. F., & Bandono, A. (2015). Pengembangan media cerita bergambar sebagai upaya meningkatkan kemampuan membaca siswa sekolah dasar. *Halaqa*, 14(1), 75-89.

- Fatoni, H. (2023). Hubungan Antara Kemampuan Membaca Dan Kemampuan Berpikir Kritis Di Era Digital. *Millennial: Jurnal Pendidikan Dan Studi Islam*, 3(1), 1-12.
- Hake, R. R. (1998). Interactive-engagement versus traditional methods: A six-thousand-student survey of mechanics test data for introductory physics courses. *American Journal of Physics*, 66(1), 64-74. <https://doi.org/10.1119/1.18809>
- Hermalia, B., & Nurhabibah, P. (2025). Efektivitas Penggunaan Media Gambar terhadap Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan Siswa Kelas 1 di SDN 1 Lemahabang. *Pendas: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Dasar*, 10(03), 333-339.
- Hermanto, H., & Kawuryan, S. P. (2021). Kesiapan guru sekolah dasar dalam penyelenggaraan pendidikan inklusif. *Jurnal Prima Edukasia*, 9(1), 102-111.
- Islamiyah, N., Azis, S. A., & Thaba, A. (2022). Pengaruh Model Pembelajaran Kooperatif Scrambel Berbantuan Media Puzzle Terhadap Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan Bahasa Indonesia Murid Sekolah Dasar. *Fon: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 18(1), 116-129.
- Jumadil, Mumpuniarti, & Purwandari, E. (2025). Pengembangan buku kontekstual kehidupan sehari-hari bagi siswa slow learner dalam membaca permulaan. *JPK (Jurnal Pendidikan Khusus)*, 21(1), 86-95.
- Kemmis, S., McTaggart, R., & Nixon, R. (2014). *The Action Research Planner*. Springer Singapore. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-4560-67-2>
- Maulidina, N., Imamah, T. A., & Dewi, I. Y. M. (2025). Strategi guru melalui penggunaan media pembelajaran kreatif dalam meningkatkan partisipasi siswa kelas 4 SDN Bangselok 1. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu Akademik*, 2(2), 217-230.
- Mertler, C. A. (2024). *Action research: Improving schools and empowering educators* (7th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2020). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Mukarromah, A., & Andriana, M. (2022). Peranan guru dalam mengembangkan media pembelajaran. *Journal of Science and Education Research*, 1(1), 43-50.
- Mulyasa, E. (2022). Pengembangan dan implementasi kurikulum merdeka. *Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya*.
- Mumpuniarti, dkk. (2014). Kebutuhan belajar siswa lambat belajar (slow learner) dikelas awal sekolah dasar Daerah Istimewa Yogyakarta [Laporan penelitian]. Universitas Negeri Yogyakarta.
- Munawaroh, F., Prastika, D., Malinda, D. P., & Tansilurrahman, M. (2024). Peran perpustakaan sekolah dalam meningkatkan minat membaca siswa. *Jurnal Multidisiplin Ilmu Akademik*, 1(4), 8-17.
- Naila, F. A., Nugroho, A. A., & Kholifah, P. N. (2024). Analisis Kemampuan Literasi Membaca dalam Soal Asesmen Nasional pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Ainara Journal (Jurnal Penelitian Dan PKM Bidang Ilmu Pendidikan)*, 5(4), 539-543.
- Nuraeni, A. (2025). Analisis Membaca Permulaan Pada Siswa Kelas I di Sekolah Dasar Negeri 01 Margorejo Tahun Pelajaran 2023/2024. *Griya Cendikia*, 10(1), 409-415.
- Pujaningsih. (2011). *Pendidikan Anak Berkesulitan Belajar Spesifik*. Yogyakarta: Pengembangan Kompetensi Guru SLB non-PLB, Dinas Pendidikan, Pemuda, dan Olahraga (DIKPORA) DIY.
- Pujiarti, T., Putra, A., & Astuti, K. P. (2024). Faktor Penghambat Pembelajaran Membaca Permulaan pada Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Evaluasi Dan Kajian Strategis Pendidikan Dasar*, 1(1), 1-7.

- Rahmah, N. N., & Amaliya, N. (2022). Efektivitas Penggunaan Media Big Book Terhadap Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Cakrawala Pendas*, 8(3), 738–745.
- Rahim, F. (2008). *Pengajaran Membaca di Sekolah Dasar*. Jakarta: Bumi Aksara.
- Ramadanu, F., Simanjuntak, H., & Sitorus, F. R. (2023). Buku Cerita Gambar Sebagai Media Peningkatan Minat Baca Siswa Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Bahasa Indonesia Prima (BIP)*, 5(1), 1–6.
- Sabarti Akhadiah. (1993). *Bahasa Indonesia 1*. Jakarta: Depdikbud Dirjen Dikti.
- Safitri, D. S., Afryaningsih, Y., & Setiawan, A. (2025). Pengembangan buku cerita bergambar berbasis pendidikan lingkungan hidup untuk pembelajaran membaca permulaan siswa kelas II Sekolah Dasar. *Jurnal Edukasi*, 3(2), 83–95.
- Santhyami, S. (2023). Pemanfaatan Media Pembelajaran Bigbook untuk Meningkatkan Minat Baca Siswa Kelas 1 Sekolah Dasar. *Buletin Pengembangan Perangkat Pembelajaran*.
- Sardiman, A. M. (2011). *Interaksi dan Motivasi Belajar Mengajar*. Jakarta: PT RajaGrafindo Persada.
- Sari, L. D. K., & Wardani, K. W. (2021). Pengembangan buku cerita bergambar digital untuk meningkatkan karakter tanggung jawab siswa di sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 5(4), 1968–1977.
- Sritatutik Mustova. (2009). “Efektivitas Penggunaan Metode Kupas Rangkaian Suku Kata dengan Media Gambar terhadap Peningkatan Kemampuan Membaca Permulaan Anak Tunagrahita Kelas D3 di SLB C Setya Dharma Surakarta Tahun Ajaran 2008/2009”. *Skripsi. FKIP UNS*.
- Sudjana, N. (2010). *Penilaian hasil proses belajar mengajar*.
- Sugiyono, D. (2013). *Metode penelitian pendidikan pendekatan kuantitatif, kualitatif dan R&D*.
- Sukinah, Mumpuniarti, & Murdiyani. (2024). *Learning Accommodation for Slow Learners in Inclusive Elementary Schools*. INKLUSI: Journal of Disability Studies, 11(2), 247–266.
- Suyatno, U. (2022). Peningkatan kemampuan membaca permulaan siswa kelas 1 sekolah dasar melalui media kartu huruf. *RI'AYATULATHFAL: Early Childhood Education Journal*, 1(1), 31–40.
- Tiani, F., Simbolon, M. E., & Hermawati, E. (2023). Penerapan metode fonik terhadap kemampuan membaca permulaan siswa. *Jurnal Ilmiah Aquinas*, 172–178.
- Wardani, I.G.A.K. (1995). *Pengajaran Bahasa Indonesia Bagi Anak Berkesulitan Belajar*. Jakarta: Depdikbud Dirjen Dikti.
- Yusuf, S. (2003). *Psikologi Perkembangan Anak dan Remaja*. Bandung: PT Remaja Rosdakarya.