

## Efforts to Improve Students' Beginning Reading Abilities by Using the Phonics Method in Class II of SDN Pejamben I

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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** This study addresses the issue of improving the learning outcomes of grade II students in Indonesian language subjects, specifically focusing on beginning reading through the phonics method. The aim is to enhance students' reading skills and overall academic performance in this area. **Method:** The research was conducted in two cycles, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The data were analyzed to assess student learning outcomes, and consultations were made with established success criteria to measure progress. Observations during each cycle helped identify key areas for improvement, such as the need for clearer explanation of learning objectives, use of media, and fostering student engagement. **Results:** In the pre-cycle, several shortcomings were identified, such as the lack of a clear explanation of learning objectives, absence of media and props, and insufficient opportunities for students to express opinions. In Cycle 1, while improvements were made, there were still issues, such as the teacher's failure to encourage student participation. Cycle II showed further improvements, with better motivation and more engaging teaching methods. As a result, student learning outcomes improved significantly across both cycles. **Novelty:** This research demonstrates that the phonics method can effectively enhance the learning outcomes of grade II students in Indonesian language subjects related to beginning reading. The study highlights the importance of teacher engagement, the use of varied teaching strategies, and motivation in fostering better student performance.

## INTRODUCTION

Indonesian in elementary school is one of the subjects that can be used to develop student activities. The Indonesian language lesson on beginning reading is the beginning of students' understanding in knowing letters (alphabet). Indonesian has a central role in the development of social and emotional intellectuals. Thus, Indonesian is the language of content applied in elementary schools to learn the basics of language which in general elementary schools cannot be separated from the mother tongue, although the mother tongue is applied, Indonesian remains the unifying language. Therefore, Indonesian is used as a means of communication between teachers and students during the teaching and learning process. Language is verbal communication where language is social because communication always involves two people, the giver and receiver of information. Elementary education plays an important role in building the foundation of knowledge and basic skills for students, one of the components of language is reading. Reading is a basic skill that is the gateway to lifelong knowledge and learning [1].

Early childhood learning is a learning stage that is handed over to adult children 0-8 years old where at this age children will easily welcome, explore, see and follow everything that is exemplified, listened to and shown [2]. The initial reading stage for

children is initial reading where symbols of language sounds are replaced with note and sound icons. The aim of reading is so that children are able to master and pronounce simple words written easily and precisely in a short time. From the results of observations, it was found that many children experienced obstacles when reading

Reading is an important skill that must be mastered by students since they are young, because reading helps students to expand their knowledge to communicate with others [3]. Thus, the success of students can be seen during the learning process where students are able to know the knowledge and skills in understanding and mastering the contents of the material that has been given by the teacher during the learning process. This is to determine the success of students through formative and summative results. In addition. The improvement of students' learning outcomes can be seen from the success process of teachers and students. Understanding early childhood development includes various stimuli, approaches, plans, methods, strategies, platforms, and pedagogical tools needed to support development in all areas of child development, depending on the child's needs based on age stage [4].

Early reading skills for early childhood occur in several stages, including: (1) fantasy stage (magical stage), namely children begin to learn to use books, see and turn the pages of books or bring their favorite books [5]. stage (2) formation of self-concept (self-concept stage), namely children begin to view themselves as 'readers', the child's involvement in reading activities is seen, pretending to read books, interpreting pictures based on previous experiences, and using standard language that does not match the writing; (3) picture reading stage (bridging reading stage), namely children begin to grow awareness of writing in books and find words that have been encountered before, can express words that are meaningful and related to themselves, already know the writing of poetry words, songs, and already know the alphabet; (4) reading introduction stage (take off reader stage), children start to use three sign systems (graphoponics, semantics and syntax), also start to be interested in reading, can remember writing in a certain context, try to recognize signs in the environment, and read various signs such as on billboards, milk cartons, toothpaste and others, and (5) fluent reading stage (independent reader stage), namely children can read various types of books. Beginning reading is part of children's language skills.

The ability to use appropriate media, methods, approaches and strategies in meaningful and enjoyable learning for students. The use of media is one component in learning. The use of media can help teachers to realize student-centered learning. Method is a tool and step in the use of learning used by teachers as an intermediary for delivering material. The use of the right method can help in learning activities because with the right method it can increase students' learning motivation.

Learning methods are a way, procedure or certain learning steps that are applied so that the objectives or competencies of the expected learning outcomes will be achieved quickly more effectively and efficiently. According to KBBI, a method is a regular way used to carry out a job so that it is achieved properly [6].

Learning outcomes are the most important thing in learning, student success can be measured from their learning achievements. Learning outcomes are essentially changes in behavior as a result of learning in a broader sense covering cognitive, affective, and psychomotor fields. Learning outcomes can also be seen from follow-up interactions and teaching actions [7].

The use of phonics method can help students' learning outcomes in learning Indonesian about beginning reading in grade II of elementary school is the first step to knowing and understanding the alphabet. Where students can easily remember learning in the learning process, namely by using the phonics method. Thus, the right method can improve students' learning outcomes by using the phonics method for Indonesian lessons about beginning reading at SD Negeri Pejamben I, Carita District, Pandeglang Regency, Banten, so far it has not been optimal because at this time teachers only use old-fashioned methods such as lectures without steps that use concrete methods. This causes low learning outcomes of students in Indonesian language lessons. Based on the background that has been conveyed above, the researcher is interested in conducting a case study of classroom practice with the title "Efforts to Improve Students' Beginning Reading Skills Using the Phonics Method for Class II at SDN Pejamben I

Based on the theory and framework of thought above, it can be concluded that the temporary assumption is: By using the Phonics Method in learning Indonesian about beginning reading, it can improve the learning outcomes of Class II Students of SDN SD Negeri Pejamben I, Carita District, Pandeglang Regency.

## RESEARCH METHOD

The data used in this study are quantitative data in the form of observation results and observations that are poured into information in the form of sentences that provide an overview of student activities in following lessons and teacher skills in managing teaching and learning activities. As for other data, I use secondary data, namely data that is done by people other than students. This study chooses Classroom Action Research (CAR) which is seen as a step in Action research. Different research approaches are usually types of research. Usually the research conducted rarely touches directly on practical school problems, and teachers are often treated as objects rather than subjects. Dissemination of research results usually takes a relatively long time, so giving them attention usually takes a relatively long time.

Subject and object are 18 students of class II of Pejamben 1 Elementary School, Carita District, consisting of 15 female students and 2 male students. The class II teacher is the subject of the action implementation. Because there are still many students in class II who have low Indonesian language learning outcomes. The object of the research is about improving the learning outcomes of Indonesian language in early reading and using the phonics method, techniques and data collection instruments.

Observation is a data collection technique carried out through observation, accompanied by records of the condition or behavior of the target object. Observation is

a systematic recording of the symptoms being studied [8]. Observation techniques are systematic observations and recording of the phenomena being investigated. In a broad sense, observation is actually not only limited to observations carried out directly or indirectly.

The observation stage was carried out during the learning activities in cycle I and after the learning was completed. The author, assisted by a colleague, Mrs. Janah Sujanah, S.Pd, carried out the following activities : (1). Conducting a discussion regarding the learning improvement plan (2). Mrs. Janah Sujanah, S.Pd as a colleague conducted observations on the implementation of the learning methods used. (3) Mrs. Janah Sujanah, S.Pd recorded every activity and change that occurred during the implementation of learning (4). Conducting a discussion with Mrs. Janah Sujanah, S.Pd regarding the weaknesses and strengths carried out by the researcher during the learning process and providing suggestions for improvements for the next learning .

Performance is an assessment of actions or practical tests that can be effectively used for the purpose of collecting various information about forms of behavior or skills that are expected to emerge in students [9]. According to Meianti 2021, a document is a form of data collection on an activity or experience that is processed into a writing or real data and becomes evidence of an achievement [10].

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Students in the pre-cycle learning activities there were 8 students who achieved scores above the KKM with an average of 6.25 with a percentage of 44.4% after the improvement of cycle I, student learning outcomes increased to 12 students who achieved scores above the KKM with an average score of 69.61 with a percentage of 66.7% then in the improvement activities of cycle II the results of students increased to 17 students achieving scores above the KKM with an average score of 84 with a percentage of 94.4%. Thus the increase in student learning outcomes from the pre-cycle to cycle II activities.

The use of phonics methods can improve students' learning outcomes in the learning process where students initially do not have motivation. With the phonics method, students can find solutions to problems easily and can understand them.

From the data above, it can be concluded that from the students in the pre-cycle learning activities, there were 8 students who achieved scores above the KKM with an average of 6.25 with a percentage of 44.4%. After the improvement in cycle I, the learning outcomes of students increased to 12 students who achieved scores above the KKM with an average score of 69.61 with a percentage of 66.7%. Furthermore, in the improvement activities in cycle II, the results of students increased to 17 students achieving scores above the KKM with an average score of 84 with a percentage of 94.4%.

Based on the observation, the students' activeness is still lacking, this can be seen from the learning only being centered on the teacher and the teacher is not maximizing in using the method so that the right method is being improved, namely the phonics

method, after taking action using the phonics method, the results began to be seen very well. In cycle I, the students' activeness was seen, although there were still some who did not have the courage, but in cycle II the teacher began to see the students' activeness by giving students the opportunity to ask questions and express their opinions. So that students have confidence in the learning process. Thus. Based on the results obtained from cycle I to cycle II, it can be concluded that students using the phonics method can improve students' learning outcomes in early reading at SD Negeri Pejamben 1, Carita District.

Improving the initial reading skills of students in grade II of SDN Pejamben I can be done through the application of the phonics method, which has been proven effective in various studies. The phonics method focuses on recognizing letter sounds and combining sounds to form words, which are important steps in the process of learning to read [1]. Research by Gunawan et al. shows that a verbal linguistic-based approach can improve students' language skills, including reading skills [11]. In addition, Syarifudin emphasized the importance of the right approach in teaching reading, which can be adjusted to the student's ability level [12].

In the context of using the phonics method, research by Ariyanti shows that the application of this method can improve children's reading abilities, including those with dyslexia [13]. The results of the study showed that by using the phonics method, the average reading ability of students increased significantly. This is in line with Setiawan's findings which state that the right teacher strategies in reading learning can meet the needs of students [14]. Thus, the implementation of the phonics method at SDN Pejamben I can be adjusted to strategies that have been proven effective in previous research.

The importance of using the phonics method is also supported by research conducted by Yekti, which shows that structured reading strategies can increase students' interest in reading [15]. In the study, students involved in the structured reading program showed significant improvements in their reading skills. This suggests that the phonics method, which is part of the structured reading strategy, can provide the same positive impact at SDN Pejamben I.

Furthermore, research by Fadhilah revealed that teacher strategies in improving reading skills in grade I are very important for student success [16]. In this context, the application of phonics methods can be an effective strategy to improve students' early reading skills. This study shows that teachers need to use various approaches and methods that are appropriate to the characteristics of students to achieve optimal results.

In addition, research by Setyaningsih and Indrawati shows that developing reading skills in early childhood is very important and can be done through various strategies [17]. They noted that the diversity of methods used in teaching can help students understand and master reading skills. Therefore, the application of the phonics method at SDN Pejamben I must be integrated with other approaches that support the development of students' reading skills as a whole.

In its implementation, the phonics method must be supported by a conducive

learning environment. Rahayu emphasized that teachers' perceptions of reading comprehension learning greatly influence students' success [18]. Therefore, it is important for teachers at SDN Pejamben I to have a good understanding of the phonics method and how to implement it in daily learning. Thus, teachers can create a learning atmosphere that supports and motivates students to learn to read.

Furthermore, research by Muhyidin et al. showed that the right early reading and writing learning method can improve students' skills in early grades [19]. This study emphasizes the importance of using methods that suit students' needs, which is in line with the implementation of the phonics method at SDN Pejamben I. By using the phonics method, students can more easily understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is the basis of reading ability.

The importance of collaboration between teachers and parents is also expressed in a study by Khusna et al., which shows that parental support in the learning process can increase students' interest in reading [20]. Therefore, at SDN Pejamben I, parental involvement in supporting the implementation of the phonics method can be a key factor in improving students' reading skills. By involving parents, students will feel more motivated to learn and practice reading at home.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the phonics method, teachers at SDN Pejamben I also need to conduct regular evaluations of student progress. Research by Destian et al. shows that proper evaluation can help teachers identify areas that need improvement in the learning process [21]. By conducting evaluations, teachers can adjust teaching methods and provide additional support to students who need it.

In addition, research by Ernalis and Syahrudin revealed that developing a learning model based on attitudes, skills, and knowledge can improve students' beginning reading abilities [22]. Therefore, in SDN Pejamben I, the application of the phonics method must be integrated with a learning model that pays attention to these aspects. In this way, students not only learn to read, but also develop a positive attitude towards reading.

It is important to create a culture of literacy in schools. Research by Saragih shows that reading aloud strategies can improve students' activities and learning outcomes [23]. By implementing the phonics method and combining it with reading aloud activities, students at SDN Pejamben I can be more involved in the learning process and improve their reading skills significantly.

So, considering all existing research, the implementation of the phonics method at SDN Pejamben I is the right step to improve students' early reading skills. Through a structured approach, support from teachers and parents, and ongoing evaluation, students can make significant progress in their reading skills. Therefore, it is important for all parties involved in education to work together to support the implementation of this phonics method.

## CONCLUSION

**Fundamental Finding :** The use of the phonics method in Indonesian language subjects significantly improved student learning outcomes. In the pre-cycle, only 44.4% of students achieved scores above the minimum criteria (KKM). After improvements in cycles I and II, the percentage increased to 66.7% and 94.4%, respectively. **Implication :** This research highlights the effectiveness of the phonics method in addressing difficulties in reading Indonesian language material for grade II students. It emphasizes the importance of using appropriate teaching methods and media to enhance student learning. **Limitation :** The study was conducted only at SD Negeri Pejamben 1, Carita District, Pandeglang, so the findings may not be generalized to other schools or grade levels without further research. **Future Research :** Future research could explore the application of the phonics method in other subjects or grade levels, as well as the long-term impact on student literacy development. Additionally, investigating the role of teacher professional development in adopting new teaching methods could be valuable.

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