

The Influence of Using the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" Learning Media on Improving Initial Reading Skills of Grade 1 Students at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang

Dimas Anggi Darmawan^{1*}, Noer Intan Oktavia², Frida Ayu Pasha Ramadhani³, Khusnul Khotimah⁴, Shofiya Nur Chasana⁵

^{1,2,3,4}Department of Elementary and Pre-School Education, Malang State University, Malang, Indonesia

⁵Elementary School Sawojajar 1, Malang, Indonesia

*Corresponding author, email: dimas.anggi.2201516@students.um.ac.id

Keywords

Learning Media

Initial Reading

Book-Based Media

Abstract

This research was conducted as a response to the real problems faced in learning beginning reading at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang, where there is a gap between curriculum standards and students' actual abilities in recognizing letters, reading syllables, and composing words into simple sentences. This study aims to determine the effect of using "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media on improving the beginning reading skills of grade 1 students, by applying a quantitative approach through a One Group Pretest-Posttest design involving 13 purposively selected students. Data was obtained through pretest and posttest tests, and analyzed using Paired Sample T-Test, which showed an increase in the average score from 46.615 in the pretest to 75.692 in the posttest with a significance value of $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$). The findings of this study indicate that the use of the media, with the support of an interactive visual approach and personalized guidance, is effective in improving beginning reading skills, in line with previous research on the effectiveness of interactive media in reading learning.

1. Introduction

Reading skills are one of the most important basic skills for elementary school students to master. Reading is not just about recognizing letters and words, but also understanding the meaning of the text being read. Reading activities are very important to do and practice in order to gain a lot of information and increase one's knowledge (Rahma & Dafit, 2021). At the elementary school level, reading skills form the foundation for supporting the learning process across all subjects (Rahmah & Amaliya, 2022). Therefore, mastering this skill from an early age is crucial to a student's success in participating in the overall learning process. In general, reading skills in elementary school students encompass several aspects, including the ability to recognize letters and words, understand vocabulary, read fluently, and comprehend the content and purpose of the text. This process involves the collaboration of cognitive abilities, attention, and reading interest. In the learning process in first grade, teachers play an important role in guiding students to develop early reading skills. Early reading is the initial stage of the reading learning process for elementary school students in lower grades (Kambu et al., 2025). Beginning reading is the process of learning to read and recognize letters, read syllables, and read simple words and sentences (Nurdiana et al., 2024). The main objective of beginning reading is for students to be able to recognize, pronounce, and understand simple words. Success in early reading will lay a strong foundation for mastering more complex reading skills in the next grade. The early reading learning process requires appropriate and engaging methods to keep students interested and motivated. Teachers need to use enjoyable approaches, such as word games, songs, picture stories, and engaging visual media to facilitate students' understanding of letters and words. Additionally, parental involvement is crucial in supporting children during reading activities at home, helping them become accustomed to the process and avoid difficulties in following school-based learning. Early reading is particularly important for first-grade students to enable them to read simple words and sentences smoothly and effortlessly (Rafika et al., 2020).

Difficulties in early reading are a common challenge faced by students in the early stages of learning to read, especially at the elementary school level. Early reading involves the ability to recognize letters, connect sounds with symbols (phonemes and graphemes), and string letters

together to form syllables and words. Many students struggle to understand the relationship between letters and sounds, which is a crucial foundation for the reading process. These difficulties often arise due to a lack of readiness for learning when children enter elementary school. This readiness includes fine motor skills, the ability to hear and distinguish sounds, and mastery of basic vocabulary. Children who are not accustomed to interacting with written language or who do not receive sufficient language stimulation before school tend to experience difficulties in understanding the basic concepts of reading. Without this foundation, they will struggle to follow systematic reading instruction. Another factor influencing early reading difficulties is the variation in cognitive and language abilities among children. Some children may have language development disorders, such as dyslexia, which cause them to be slower in recognizing and processing letter symbols. In addition, teaching methods that are not suited to a child's learning style can also exacerbate the situation. If the approach used is too abstract or lacks multisensory activities, students may have difficulty understanding basic reading concepts.

Based on the results of observations that have been conducted, there are still students who experience difficulties in basic reading skills. Out of three classes, there are 13 students who are not yet proficient in basic reading. First-grade elementary school students should already be able to read because there are no longer any reading exercise books in the textbooks, and there are no longer any basic reading lessons. Without guidance, students who are struggling will find it difficult to read and write answers because they do not understand how to read the questions. This is exacerbated by the lack of appropriate and enjoyable learning materials for students. The use of interactive learning materials can improve students' basic reading skills.

Several studies have shown the effectiveness of concrete media such as word boards and bingo boards in improving students' early reading skills. Research by Wahab et al. (2023) shows that the use of board media can improve literacy in students. The spinning wheel learning media is a circular tool with pictures that is spun and moves on its axis until it stops on one of the letters. (Putri, 2020). Research conducted by Junaedah et al (2024) and Noviyanti et al (2021) on the use of spinning wheel media to improve students' early reading skills. Both studies had the same results, namely that the use of spinning wheel media can improve students' early reading skills. Additionally, research by Chadijah (2024), Ritonga & Rambe (2022), and Chasanah et al (2021) conducted similar studies to determine the improvement in students' early reading skills using big book and picture book media. The results of these studies showed that using big book and picture book media can enhance students' reading skills.

The title "The Effect of Using the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" Learning Media in Improving the Beginning Reading Skills of First Grade Students at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang" was chosen because it stems from real problems found in the process of teaching beginning reading. Based on observations, there are still students who struggle to recognize letters, read syllables, and form simple sentences, even though reading instruction is no longer the primary focus in textbooks. This indicates a gap between the standards expected in the curriculum and the actual abilities of first- grade students. Therefore, a more effective approach is needed to help students achieve optimal reading skills. The difference between this study and previous studies lies in the selection of learning media, which is supplemented with a spinning wheel game to enhance students' active participation in learning.

The selection of the Ayo Belajar Membaca learning media as the focus of this study was based on its effectiveness in providing visual and interactive support for students. This media not only presents systematic reading texts, but also features attractive illustrations and a spinning wheel, which allows students to practice phonetic patterns in a more enjoyable way. This media also has several levels that are adjusted according to difficulty. The purpose of using levels in this medium is to prevent students from experiencing difficulties and to enable them to learn step by step. With a combination of visual approaches and personal guidance from teachers, it is hoped that this method can increase students' motivation to learn and provide more optimal results in early reading skills. Therefore, this study was conducted to analyze the extent to which this learning medium can help first-grade students at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang develop their reading skills.

2. Method

This research applies a quantitative approach with Pre-experimental Design method, specifically using One Group Pretest-Posttest Design. This design aims to compare the conditions

before and after treatment, so as to measure the effectiveness of using the “Ayo Belajar Membaca” learning media in improving the beginning reading skills of grade 1 elementary school students. According to Sugiyono (2023), the One Group Pretest-Posttest design allows researchers to see changes that occur after treatment is given by comparing pretest and posttest results.

This research was conducted at Sawojajar 1 Elementary School in Malang City, selected based on observational results indicating that some first-grade students experienced difficulties in beginning reading. The study population encompassed all 84 first-grade students at the school. Employing a purposive sampling technique, participants were selected according to specific criteria: identified difficulties in beginning reading. Based on these criteria, 13 students were included in the sample. The sample size of 13 was considered appropriate for this study as it allowed for intensive intervention and detailed monitoring of each participant's progress, which is essential for addressing individual reading difficulties. Furthermore, this sample size aligns with similar studies focusing on targeted reading interventions for early elementary students (Austin et al., 2021). The study involves two main variables: the independent variable, the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" media, and the dependent variable, students' beginning reading skills.

The data collection technique in this study was carried out using the test method, which consisted of pretest and posttest. Pretest was conducted before the use of “Ayo Belajar Membaca” media to measure students' initial ability in beginning reading. The posttest was conducted after the treatment was given to evaluate the improvement of students' reading skills. The instrument used in this study is a rubric for assessing beginning reading skills, which includes aspects of reading accuracy, fluency, understanding of meaning, and pronunciation.

The data analysis technique in this study used a prerequisite test in the form of a normality test, which aims to ensure that the data obtained is normally distributed before further analysis is carried out. After the normality test is carried out, the data analysis uses Paired Sample T-Test, which aims to see if there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results. According to Wahyudi et al. (2023), Paired Sample T-Test is a statistical method that is often used in educational research to measure the effectiveness of a treatment on student learning outcomes.

The analysis was conducted using statistical software such as SPSS, which allows the calculation of the mean value, standard deviation, and significance value (p-value) to determine whether there is a significant improvement in students' beginning reading skills after the use of learning media. If the p-value is <0.05, then it can be concluded that the use of "Ayo Belajar Membaca" media has a significant effect on improving students' reading skills.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Statistical Test Results

Before conducting further analysis of the research data, the first step that needs to be taken is to ensure that the data obtained meets the normal distribution assumption. Normality test is a statistical procedure used to determine whether the data in a variable is normally distributed or not. To ensure that the data used in this study meet the normal distribution assumption, a normality test is carried out on each variable using the Shapiro-Wilk test. The choice of this test is based on the number of samples less than 50, so Shapiro-Wilk is more appropriate than Kolmogorov-Smirnov. In the normality test, data is said to be normally distributed if the significance value (Sig.) > 0.05. Meanwhile, for abnormal data, the significance value (Sig.) ≤ 0.05.

Table 1. Normality Test

| | Kolmogorv-Smirnov | | | Shapiro-Wilk | | |
|----------|-------------------|----|-------|--------------|----|------|
| | Statistic | df | Sig. | Statistic | df | Sig. |
| Pretest | .127 | 13 | .200* | .938 | 13 | .426 |
| posttest | .200 | 13 | .162 | .871 | 13 | .055 |

Based on the test results above, the significance value (Sig.) for the pretest variable is 0.426 and the posttest variable is 0.055. This shows that both data obtained are normally distributed.

After ensuring that the data meets the normal distribution assumption, the next step in statistical analysis is to conduct the Paired Sample T-Test, which is a parametric statistical test. This test is used to compare two mean values of the same group at two different times. The basis for decision-making in the Paired Sample T-Test test is based on the significance value (p-value) and the previously set significance level (usually $\alpha = 0.05$). If the Sig.(2-Tailed) value ≥ 0.05 , it can be state that there is no significant difference between the two data being compared. Conversely, if the Sig.(2- Tailed) value < 0.05 , it can be stated that there is a significant difference between the two data being compared.

Table 2. Paired Sample T-Test

| | | Paired Differences | | | | | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
|--------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------------|---|----------|---------|----|-----------------|
| | | Mean | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean | 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference | | | | |
| | | | | | Lower | Upper | | | |
| Pair 1 | Pretest-Posttest | -29.0769 | 7.7132 | 2.1393 | -33.7380 | -24.4159 | -13.592 | 12 | .000 |

Table 3. Paired Sample Statistics

| | | Mean | N | Std. Deviation | Std. Error Mean |
|--------|----------|--------|----|----------------|-----------------|
| Pair 1 | Pretest | 46.615 | 13 | 17.4453 | 4.8385 |
| | Posttest | 75.692 | 13 | 18.2592 | 5.0642 |

Based on the results of the paired sample t-test, the sig value is obtained. (2-tailed) of 0.000. So it can be stated that there is a significant difference between the two data tested. In addition, the average score obtained from the pretest and posttest statistically increased from 46.615 to 75.692.

3.2. Discussion

This study aims to determine the effect of using "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media on improving the beginning reading skills of grade I students of SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang. In this study, the subjects involved were 13 grade I students who were selected as samples. Each student was given an initial test (pretest) to measure their beginning reading skills before treatment was given, then learning was carried out using the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" media as a form of intervention, and after that students were again given a final test (posttest) to see changes in reading skills that occurred. This series of treatments is intended to assess the effectiveness of the learning media in helping students develop basic reading skills, such as letter recognition, syllables, and simple words. By comparing the results of the pretest and posttest, researchers can find out whether there is a significant improvement in beginning reading skills after the use of the learning media.

Based on the results of data analysis using the Paired Sample t-Test test, the pretest average score was 46.615, while the posttest average increased to 75.692. This indicates an increase in score of 29.077 points after using the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media. This increase of 29,077 points shows that the use of the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media has a significant impact on students' early reading skills. The increase in the average posttest score compared to the pretest reflects a positive change in mastery of the material after students received instruction using this media. This can be interpreted as the media used being able to facilitate a more effective and enjoyable learning process, as well as attracting students' interest and attention in understanding basic reading concepts. Additionally, this increase also serves as an indicator that learning methods involving interactive and contextual media can help early-grade students develop basic literacy skills more optimally. Statistically, this improvement was tested using a Paired Sample t-Test and yielded a significance value (p-value) of 0.000, which is less than the significance level of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a significant difference between the pretest and posttest results of the students. In other words, the use of the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media has a significant impact on improving the early reading skills of first-grade elementary school students.

This is reinforced by previous research on the development and application of Big Book media in early reading learning, which showed that interactive strategies developed with the ADDIE model resulted in significant improvements in students' reading skills. The trial results, which showed that the average score increased from 62.5 in trial I to 87.5 in trial II, with an average final score of 84 (very good category), confirmed that the application of story-based media equipped with interesting pictures and educational games was able to stimulate reading interest and deepen students' understanding of the text (Syelviana et al., 2019). These findings provide empirical evidence that the

use of interactive media that combines various visual elements is effective in overcoming early reading difficulties.

In addition, research conducted by Rahmah & Amaliya (2022) on the effectiveness of Big Book media in early reading learning further strengthens the evidence that visual-based and interactive approaches have a positive impact on low-grade students' reading skills. The results of the study which showed significant differences between the experimental and control classes confirmed that the use of Big Book media not only improved beginning reading skills but also encouraged student activeness in the learning process. In addition to these significant differences, another thing that is no less important is the level of difficulty of the text itself, because this aspect greatly affects students' interest and motivation in reading. The level of difficulty of a text can have a big impact on students' interest and motivation in reading. Texts that are too complex have the potential to make students feel frustrated and lose their enthusiasm for reading. Therefore, the content presented in the Big Book is delivered with simple language and short sentences, which greatly supports the development of the reading skills of beginning students.

Thus, the results of this study reinforce the argument that the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media, which promotes a similar concept through an interactive visual approach and personal guidance, is the right choice for improving the early reading skills of lower grade students, especially at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang. The "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media has significant potential for adaptation in various learning contexts with greater variety, both in terms of content, methods, and presentation formats. This media can be developed for higher grade levels by adding advanced literacy content such as reading comprehension, thematic vocabulary, or sentence construction, and adapted for inclusive education needs with visual and audio features that are friendly for students with special needs.

3.3. Conclusion

This study aimed to measure the effectiveness of the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" learning media in improving the beginning reading skills of grade 1 students at SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang. The development of this media was based on real challenges in the field, where several students still experienced difficulties in recognizing letters, reading syllables, and forming simple sentences. The media was designed with an interactive and visually engaging approach, equipped with attractive illustrations and a rotating wheel to enhance students' motivation.

The implementation of the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" media proved to be effective in improving students' early reading skills. The results of the pretest and posttest indicated an increase in the average score from forty-six point six one five to seventy-five point six nine two. Statistical analysis using the Paired Sample T-Test confirmed that this increase was significant, indicating that the media contributed positively to students' reading performance.

In conclusion, the "Ayo Belajar Membaca" media is highly effective for early reading instruction in lower grades. Practically, this media can be recommended for broader implementation in other schools facing similar challenges, particularly by integrating it into the existing early literacy curriculum to create engaging, motivating, and effective learning experiences. For future research, it is recommended to involve larger and more diverse samples and consider the use of control groups to validate these findings across different school contexts.

Author Contributions

All authors have equal contributions to the paper. All the authors have read and approved the final manuscript.

Funding

No funding support was received.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Acknowledgement (Optional)

We express our deep gratitude to the State University of Malang, especially the Teaching Assistance Program Year 2025, which has provided opportunities for us to continue to develop insights and skills through this program. With the guidance of a competent and patient lecturer, Mrs. Khusnul Khotimah, S.Pd., M.Pd. as a field supervisor, we can carry out this research until the stage of preparing a report which will later be published in the form of a journal article. We also express our appreciation to SDN Sawojajar 1 Malang City, the principal, and the teachers of SDN Sawojajar 1 for the opportunity and support provided during the research process. Also, thank you to our Teaching Assistance colleagues who contributed to the preparation of this research. All the support and cooperation provided are valuable experiences in our academic journey.

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