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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PHONICS METHOD IN IMPROVING THE READING SKILLS OF GRADE 1 STUDENTS AT SDN 4 GERESIK TASIKMALAYA

PENERAPAN METODE PHONICS DALAM MENINGKATKAN KETERAMPILAN MEMBACA SISWA KELAS 1 SDN 4 GERESIK TASIKMALAYA

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Abstract

This study aims to improve students' reading skills by implementing the phonics teaching method in the first grade of SDN 4 Geresik Tasikmalaya. In this study, we used the Classroom Action Research (CAR) Method following the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which consists of two cycles. Each cycle involves the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Data were collected through observation, interviews, pretest-posttest, and documentation. The results of the study showed that the implementation of the phonics method succeeded in improving the reading skills of grade 1 students, both in recognizing letters, spelling words, reading simple sentences, and understanding the contents of the reading. This can be seen from the increase in reading test scores and student activities during the learning process.

Keywords: Phonics Method, Reading Skills, Grade 1 Students.

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan keterampilan membaca siswa dengan menerapkan metode pengajaran phonics di kelas satu SDN 4 Geresik Tasikmalaya. Dalam penelitian ini, kami menggunakan Metode Penelitian Tindakan Kelas (PTK) yang mengikuti model Kemmis dan McTaggart, yang terdiri dari dua siklus. Setiap siklus melibatkan tahapan perencanaan, pelaksanaan, pengamatan, dan refleksi. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi, tes membaca,

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dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penerapan Metode Phonics berhasil meningkatkan keterampilan membaca siswa kelas 1, baik dalam pengenalan huruf, mengeja kata, membaca kalimat sederhana, maupun memahami isi bacaan. Ini terlihat dari peningkatan skor tes membaca dan aktivitas siswa selama proses pembelajaran.

Kata Kunci: Metode Phonics, Keterampilan Membaca, Siswa Kelas 1.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the world of education, reading is an essential activity for every student. This activity plays a vital role in human life, as this skill has the power to transform an ordinary person into an extraordinary one. The main purpose of reading is to provide individuals with rich experiences, as this activity allows them to gain new information and knowledge. Therefore, reading skills are crucial for students in school. According to a survey conducted in East Asia by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), Indonesia's reading interest is still far behind compared to other countries. For example, the reading interest rate in the Philippines is 52.6, Thailand 65.1, Singapore 74.0, and Hong Kong 75.5.

Based on the researcher’s observations during learning activities in Grade 1 at SDN 4 Geresik Tasikmalaya, several issues related to reading skills were identified. Many students struggled to distinguish letters with similar shapes or sounds, such as “b” and “d” or “p” and “q”. In addition to these technical challenges in recognizing and blending letters, students’ interest and motivation to read also need improvement. The lack of variety in learning media and the limited availability of reading materials appropriate to students’ developmental levels hinder the growth of their reading interest. Another problem contributing to the low reading skills of students is the limited use of effective teaching strategies. In the learning process, teachers still tend to rely on traditional, one-way, and monotonous approaches, such as word-by-word reading or choral reading, without offering varied strategies tailored to the characteristics and needs of early grade students. Moreover, the shortage of supporting media for reading instruction is a significant obstacle. The availability of learning tools such as letter cards, phonics illustrations, syllable props, leveled reading books, and interactive digital media which could assist students in recognizing letter sounds and forms remains very limited.

There are many ways to overcome the challenges in mastering and improving reading skills. One effective method is the Phonics Method. This method focuses on teaching the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and letter symbols (graphemes), which greatly helps students in understanding words. Students are taught the sound of each letter and then learn to blend them to form words. It is important to conduct further research on how effective the Phonics Method is in improving reading skills at the elementary school level. This method

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helps students accurately recognize familiar words and also enables them to decode unfamiliar words.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This study adopts the Classroom Action Research (CAR) method. CAR serves as a bridge between theory and practice in the field of education. This is because CAR is conducted directly in the classroom, involving students in a series of planned actions that are implemented, evaluated, and reflected upon. Through this approach, teachers can obtain systematic feedback on the effectiveness of the learning process that has been applied, allowing them to adjust and optimize the teaching methods used in the classroom.

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is not only an essential need for educators but also serves as a key instrument in enhancing the quality of their performance. CAR is expected to have a positive impact across various areas, such as: (1) helping educators address real challenges that arise during the learning process; (2) improving the quality of inputs, processes, and learning outcomes both academic and non-academic; (3) strengthening educators' professionalism in managing learning effectively; and (4) enabling the implementation of research-based and sustainable improvement strategies to create a more optimal learning process.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Results

Table 1. Reading Test Results Data in Cycle I Before Implementation

No	Name	Letter and Syllable Pronunciation	Simple Words	Simple Sentence	Reading Comprehension	Final Score
1	AAR	10	10	10	10	40
2	ARF	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
3	AS	10	8	8	9.5	35.5
4	ASJ	8	7	6	7.5	28.5
5	AAB	5	4	5	6	20
6	ATF	10	10	10	9.5	39.5

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7	A	8.5	8	7	9.5	33
8	BSB	10	10	10	10	40
9	CRA	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
10	DLP	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
11	DH	7.5	7	7	7.5	30.5
12	EJ	10	10	10	10	40
13	FSP	10	10	10	10	40
14	GF	9.5	8	8	9.5	35
15	K	10	10	10	10	40
16	KSR	9.5	10	10	9.5	39
17	KZP	10	10	10	10	40
18	MFA	10	10	10	10	40
19	MMAG	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
20	MRA	10	10	10	10	40
21	RQ	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
22	RV	10	10	10	9	39
23	RKN	9	10	10	9.5	38.5
24	SS	10	10	10	10	40
25	SN	10	7	8	9.5	34.5
26	SL	8	6	6	7	27

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27	TM	9.5	10	10	9.5	39
28	ZA	10	10	10	10	40

Table 2. Categorization Based on Score

No	Name	Score	Final Grade	Category
1	AAR	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
2	ARF	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
3	AS	35.5	(35.5:40) × 100 = 88.75%	Excellent
4	ASJ	28.5	(28.5:40) × 100 = 71.25%	Good
5	AAB	20	(20:40) × 100 = 50%	Very Poor
6	ATF	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
7	A	33	(33:40) × 100 = 82.5%	Good
8	BSB	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
9	CRA	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
10	DLP	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
11	DH	30.5	(30.5:40) × 100 = 76.25%	Good
12	EJ	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
13	FSP	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
14	GF	35	(35:40) × 100 = 87.5%	Good
15	K	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent

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16	KSR	39	(39:40) × 100 = 97.5%	Excellent
17	KZP	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
18	MFA	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
19	MMAG	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
20	MRA	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
21	RQ	39.5	(39.5:40) × 100 = 98.75%	Excellent
22	RV	39	(39:40) × 100 = 97.5%	Excellent
23	RKN	38.5	(38.5:40) × 100 = 96.25%	Excellent
24	SS	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent
25	SN	34.5	(34.5:40) × 100 = 86.25%	Good
26	SL	27	(27:40) × 100 = 67.5%	Fair
27	TM	39	(39:40) × 100 = 97.5%	Excellent
28	ZA	40	(40:40) × 100 = 100%	Excellent

The results of the reading test before the implementation of the Phonics Method in Cycle I showed that the majority of students had fairly good reading abilities, with 12 students (42.86%) achieving a perfect score of 100%, 7 students (25%) scoring between 97.5% and 99%, and 4 students (14.29%) obtaining scores between 80% and 89%. However, there were 5 students (17.85%) who scored below 75%, including one student who scored 50%. This indicates challenges in understanding the relationship between letters and sounds, as well as a lack of confidence among some students.

Table 3. Reading Test Results Data in Cycle I After Implementation

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No	Name	Letter and Syllable Pronunciation	Simple Words	Simple Sentence	Reading Comprehension	Final Score
1	AAR	10	10	10	10	40
2	ARF	10	10	10	10	40
3	AS	10	8.8	8.7	9.5	37
4	ASJ	8.5	8	6.5	8	31
5	AAB	6	5	5.5	7	23.5
6	ATF	10	10	10	10	40
7	A	10	8.5	7.8	9.5	35.8
8	BSB	10	10	10	10	40
9	CRA	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
10	DLP	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
11	DH	9	8	7.5	8	32.5
12	EJ	10	10	10	10	40
13	FSP	10	10	10	10	40
14	GF	10	8.5	9	10	37.5
15	K	10	10	10	10	40
16	KSR	10	10	10	10	40
17	KZP	10	10	10	10	40

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18	MFA	10	10	10	10	40
19	MMAG	10	10	10	10	40
20	MRA	10	10	10	10	40
21	RQ	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
22	RV	10	10	10	9.5	40
23	RKN	9.5	10	10	9.5	39
24	SS	10	10	10	10	40
25	SN	10	8	8.5	9.5	36
26	SL	8.5	8	6.5	8	31
27	TM	10	10	10	9.5	39.5
28	ZA	10	10	10	10	40

Table 4. Categorization Based on Score

No	Name	Score	Final Grade	Category
1	AAR	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
2	ARF	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
3	AS	37	(37:40)×100= 92.5%	Excellent
4	ASJ	31	(31:40)×100= 77.5%	Good
5	AAB	23.5	(23.5:40)×100= 58.75%	Fair
6	ATF	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent

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7	A	35.8	(35.8:40)×100= 89.5%	Good
8	BSB	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
9	CRA	39.5	(39.5:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
10	DLP	39.5	(39.5:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
11	DH	32.5	(32.5:40)×100= 81.25%	Good
12	EJ	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
13	FSP	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
14	GF	37.5	(37.5:40)×100= 93.75%	Excellent
15	K	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
16	KSR	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
17	KZP	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
18	MFA	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
19	MMAG	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
20	MRA	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
21	RQ	39.5	(39.5:40)×100= 98.7%5	Excellent
22	RV	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
23	RKN	39	(39:40)×100= 97.5%	Excellent
24	SS	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
25	SN	36	(36:40)×100= 90%	Excellent
26	SL	31	(31:40)×100= 77.5%	Good

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27	TM	39.5	(39.5:40)×100= 98.7%5	Excellent
28	ZA	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent

Based on the results of the reading test after the implementation of the Phonics Method in Cycle I, most students showed significant improvement. Out of 27 students, 21 students (75%) achieved a perfect score (100%) and were categorized as "Excellent." Five other students scored between 77.5% and 93.75% (categorized as "Good"), with only minor errors. However, one student received a score of 58.75% (categorized as "Poor"), indicating the need for special guidance.

Table 5. Reading Results After Implementation in Cycle II

No	Name	Letter and Syllable Pronunciation	Simple Words	Simple Sentence	Reading Comprehension	Final Score
1	AAR	10	10	10	10	40
2	ARF	10	10	10	10	40
3	AS	10	10	10	10	40
4	ASJ	9	10	10	9	38
5	AAB	8	8	8	7.2	31.2
6	ATF	10	10	10	10	40
7	A	10	9.5	10	10	39.5
8	BSB	10	10	10	10	40
9	CRA	10	10	10	9.7	39.7
10	DLP	10	10	10	9.8	39.8

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11	DH	9.2	10	9.5	10	38.7
12	EJ	10	10	10	10	40
13	FSP	10	10	10	10	40
14	GF	10	10	9.8	10	39.8
15	K	10	9.3	10	10	39.3
16	KSR	10	10	10	9	39
17	KZP	10	10	10	9.3	39.3
18	MFA	10	10	10	9.8	39.8
19	MMAG	10	10	10	9.8	39.8
20	MRA	10	10	10	10	40
21	RQ	10	10	10	10	40
22	RV	10	10	10	10	40
23	RKN	10	10	10	9.8	39.8
24	SS	10	10	10	10	40
25	SN	9	9.6	9.8	10	38.4
26	SL	9.6	9	8.7	9.8	37.1
27	TM	10	10	10	9.6	39.6
28	ZA	10	10	10	10	40

Table 6. Categorization Based on Score

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No	Name	Score	Final Grade	Category
1	AAR	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
2	ARF	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
3	AS	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
4	ASJ	38	(38:40)×100= 95%	Excellent
5	AAB	31.2	(31.2:40)×100= 78%	Good
6	ATF	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
7	A	39.5	(39.5:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
8	BSB	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
9	CRA	39.7	(39.7:40)×100= 99.5%	Excellent
10	DLP	39.8	(39.8:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
11	DH	38.7	(38.7:40)×100= 96.75%	Excellent
12	EJ	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
13	FSP	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
14	GF	39.8	(39.8:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
15	K	39.3	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
16	KSR	39	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
17	KZP	39.3	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
18	MFA	39.8	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
19	MMAG	39.8	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent

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20	MRA	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
21	RQ	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
22	RV	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
23	RKN	39.8	(39.8:40)×100= 98.75%	Excellent
24	SS	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent
25	SN	38.4	(38.4:40)×100= 99.5%	Excellent
26	SL	37.1	(37.1:40)×100= 92.75%	Excellent
27	TM	39.6	(39.6:40)×100= 99%	Excellent
28	ZA	40	(40:40)×100= 100%	Excellent

Based on the reading test results after the implementation of the Phonics Method in Cycle II, there was a significant improvement compared to Cycle I. Out of 28 students, 24 students (85.71%) achieved a perfect score of 100% and were categorized as Excellent, showing progress in reading fluency, word pronunciation, and reading comprehension. Three students also reached the Excellent category with scores ranging from 92.75% to 99.5%, despite minor errors. Only one student (3.57%) scored 78% and was categorized as Good, indicating a need for further guidance. Overall, the implementation of the Phonics Method successfully improved students' reading skills, with the majority achieving the Excellent category.

B. Discussion

Overall, the observations during the learning process and the reading test results support that the Phonics Method has a positive impact on improving the reading skills of Grade 1 students. Students became more active, confident, and enthusiastic about learning to read through a more enjoyable approach that aligns with their developmental needs.

These findings provide concrete evidence that the Phonics Method is highly effective in helping students master reading skills from an early age. This systematic approach, which focuses on the relationship between letters and sounds, has proven to facilitate students in recognizing, spelling, and pronouncing words more accurately. Therefore, the implementation

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of the Phonics Method can be an appropriate instructional strategy to enhance foundational literacy among early grade elementary students.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that the implementation of the Phonics Method effectively improves the early reading skills of Grade 1 students at SDN 4 Geresik, Tasikmalaya. Through a systematic phonetic approach that emphasizes the recognition of the relationship between letters and sounds, students showed significant improvement in recognizing letters, distinguishing sounds, blending syllables, and reading simple words and sentences. Learning activities designed to be engaging using letter games and phonics songs also increased students' motivation and involvement in the reading process.

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