

‘I Am a News Reporter’ Improves Reading and Enhances Confidence Among the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing

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ABSTRACT

Reading is an important skill to be acquired by an individual. By acquiring the skill, pupils will be more confident in using the language, be it spoken or written. However, this is a major challenging task for the deaf and hard of hearing pupils especially reading in English. I Am a News Reporter makes pupils read and retell the news in English using their own words. This is the best practice which has been carried out by the teacher. In this best practice, pupils read news and then present their readings. By using this method, pupils are able to read with better understanding. When they are able to read better, it enhances their confidence in reading as well as presenting. I Am a News Reporter is the best practice to stimulate reading in English among the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH). Hope that this practice is able to sustain pupils’ interest in reading English materials and hence enhancing their self-confidence.

Keywords : Reading, Self-confidence, I Am a News Reporter, Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH)

Introduction to Best Practices

Reading is important to build a nation. It is a process of acquiring information from a material. According to Merriam-Webster (n.d.), reading is an act in order to receive or understand the letters or symbols. It is a complex and unique process for humans (Chen, Q., Kong, Y., Gao, W., Mo, L. et.al., 2018). Reading is a challenging task for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing (DHH) compare to their hearing peers. The ability in reading affects the level of self-confidence in a person (Nevo, E., Vaknin-Nusbaum, V., Brande, S. et al., 2020). Therefore, I Am a News Reporter has been introduced in order to help the DHH pupils to read and hence enhancing one’s self-confidence in reading.

Justification on the Implementation of Best Practices

As a practitioner in the Special Education Programme for the Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing, teacher realised that English reading among the pupils is very low and this leads to low self-confidence among them (Rintaningrum, R., 2019). One of the reasons that these pupils do not like reading in English is because English is not their mother tongue (Csizér, K., & Kontra, E. H., 2020). They find it difficult to learn and conquer the language as in they hardly speak or write other than their English lessons. As to

improve pupils' reading, teacher comes out with I Am a News Reporter practice where pupils get one set of English newspaper each month and each of them will choose one news article to read, to check the meaning of unfamiliar words and then present the summary of the news read in front of the class. Based on the observation and interview with the pupils, this best practice of I Am a News Reporter managed to improve their understanding in both long and short text as well as increase their vocabularies learned. By the need of presenting the news read in front of their classmates, they are also able to enhance their self-confidence.

Implementation Objectives

The objectives of this best practice are to:

1. improve reading among the DHH pupils
2. enhance self-confidence in reading and presenting among the DHH pupils

Implementation of Best Practices

The best practice is named 'I Am a News Reporter' where pupils read the news article and then present it using their own words. Below are steps of this practice:

Step 1 : Getting Newspaper

Teacher assigns pupils to take charge of the particular month's newspaper. Each pupil will in charge for at least one month. This is to give the pupils some sense of belonging and instil in them the responsibility.

Step 2 : Select Articles

Pupils will share out the same set of newspaper for that particular month and each of them will select one news article. No comics nor entertainment news allowed.

Step 3 : Reading of Article & Highlight Words

Pupils cut out the news article and paste it into their exercise book. From there, they start their reading. The first reading is to go through the overall news, followed by second time reading which is a more thorough reading with them highlighting unfamiliar words.

Step 4 : Checking Meaning

After finish reading and highlighting unfamiliar words, pupils will copy those words into the next page of their exercise book and check the meaning from the dictionary. Then, they will write out the meaning either in *Bahasa Melayu* or simple English which can make them understand better.

Step 5 : Re-reading & Writing Summary

Once they have completed Step 4, they will need to re-read the whole article and write out a simple summary according to their understanding. Summary written using their own words.

Step 6 : Presentation

Pupils present their news article by signing out the summary. They were encouraged to sign out using narrative way instead of mere reading. By this way, pupils will have higher level of self-confidence.

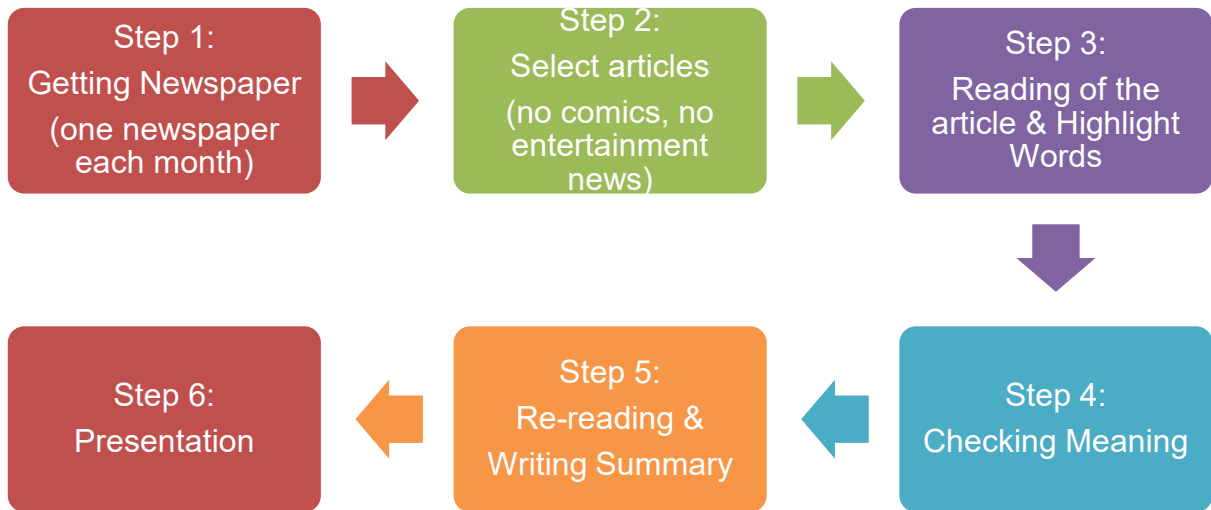
Picture 1
Selection of Article



Picture 2
Presentation



Diagram 1
Steps of The Best Practice



Effectiveness from the Implementation of Best Practices

I Am a News Reporter is an effort by the practitioner which in the hope of improving reading and hence enhancing self-confidence among the DHH pupils.

Based on the observation and interview with the pupils, majority says that this practice is helpful for them to acquire the language better. They are able to read longer text with better understanding.

Picture 3
Pupil Reading the Article (Video)



Most of the pupils that give a thumb up for this practice is those with only hearing difficulties. This best practice is especially helpful when it comes to examinations where there are several long and short texts to be read (Silvestri & Ehrenberg, 2020). The DHH pupils in the school where the practitioner is are following the mainstream syllabus and they sit for major exams such as *Pentaksiran Tingkatan*

3 (PT3) and *Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia* (SPM) as their hearing peers do. One of the pupils who graduated and now in the teaching profession also mentioned that this skill helps.

Picture 4 Short Interview

'I AM A NEWS REPORTER'

Interview:

Q 1 : Do you have problem with reading before this practice being introduced?
N : Yes.

Q 2 : If yes, what is your problem?
N : Firstly, ~~long of a news story~~ hard to read the long of news.
There is no communication between me and my family in English.

Q 3 : Is this practice helpful?
N : Yes.

Q 4 : Are you able to read longer text with better understanding after the practice?
N : Yes. Begin with focus on a short text then ~~took~~ find a dictionary which I don't know what it means. ~~Other~~ Besides that, make ^{communication} learning more accessible to friends - ~~teach~~ and teachers and keep up with learning English sign language until improved in reading long text.

Remarks:
N = nick name for the respondent

Although this practice is helpful, but when it comes to those with a combination of disabilities such as those who are having both hearing and learning difficulties, the practice is not appropriate as they need more vocabularies focusing activities instead. Besides merely reading, pupils under this practice will need to present their readings after each reading session. Once a pupil understands what he or she is reading, therefore they can present better with lesser mistakes made. After the best practice implemented, pupils initially present with lots of mistakes which required re-reading. Sooner or later after several sessions, pupils improved. From the observation by the practitioner, pupils' self-confidence increased with reading.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This best practice of *I Am a News Reporter* shows a great impact for most of the pupils. According to the interview, they strongly agreed that this practice helps them in reading longer text with better understanding and at the same time it enhances their self-confidence. The ability of reading with better understanding and self-confidence is extremely important when it comes to a person's career path (Alonzo et. al., 2020). Discrimination at workplace hoped to be minimalized if one has the ability to read. Hope that this practice will benefit more pupils in the future. Besides continuing this best practice, it will be greater if reading among pupils with both hearing and learning difficulties could be improved.

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