

**translated from Malay language original article*

Improving Special Education Student Reading Skills Through Fast Reading Methods

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ABSTRACT

Reading is an essential part of human life. Reading abilities are also a gateway to knowledge. Pupils' reading weaknesses cause them to misinterpret what is read, making it difficult for them to follow the learning process. It also has a negative impact on individual achievement in all courses. Inappropriate reading methods allow children to become bored quickly, lose interest, and fall asleep while reading. Program Celik Membaca a best practice conducted with the intention of helping Students with Special Educational Needs (SSEN) at Sekolah Kebangsaan Pernu (Pernu National School), Melaka to overcome their reading difficulties. Anugerah 2 class students who follow KSSRPK Year 2 are the target group for this practice's implementation. The data gathered using qualitative methods such as observation and interviews. The practise results show that the implementation of this practice successfully improves SEN reading skills and increases their confidence in a variety of activities, both in and out of class.

Keywords: fast reading methods, special education, reading

Introduction to Best Practices

Reading skills are one of the sources of knowledge and the foundation for a person to acquire knowledge. It is a complex process involving the mind, perception, linguistics, and psychology. Reading has been concluded as a process with no specific definition because it is an interactive process (Smith, 1978:1).

Teachers must use interesting and effective reading methods to pique students' interest in order to achieve reading skills in SSEN. Teachers must also ensure that the teaching materials match the student's learning profile. Reading repeatedly can also improve fluency and comprehension therefore, enhancing the student's reading skills. According to Musti-Roa, Harkins, and Barkley (2009), repeated reading requires students to read a passage or text several times in a short period of time or until the student can read fluently.

As a result, SK Pernu's Special Integration Education Program (PPKI) has implemented a programme that teaches reading using the rapid reading process. This good practise involves a total of 8 students from Class Anugerah 2, Sekolah

Kebangsaan Pernu. They are a mix of two female students and six male students, and the programme runs all year. The fast reading method is a method that is appropriate for current needs and can be used at the special education level. Reading skills are now one of the six elements that must be mastered in order to meet the needs of the twenty-first century.

Justification on the Implementation of Best Practices

Pupils' failure to master reading skills has an impact on their potential and mastery in all subjects, not just Malay. Because of their limitations in reading and understanding the text, these students were unable to answer the question paper well. This is a very concerning situation because if it is not resolved, the problem will be carried on to high school.

Boring reading teaching methods also cause students to lose motivation and become disinterested to follow the learning process in the classroom. This situation can lead to other issues in class, such as a loss of concentration while learning and truancy. The Reading Literacy Program was created with a specific goal in mind to address this issue. This programme has the potential to improve students' reading skills while also increasing their motivation to achieve academic excellence.

Implementation Objectives

The Reading Literacy Program was developed to help SSEN at SK Pernu overcome reading difficulties by using the fast reading methods. The goal of this good practice is to :

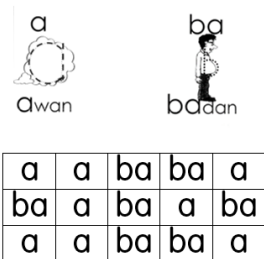
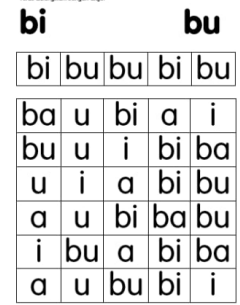

1. Improve students' reading abilities
2. Develop self-assurance in SSEN ability to read and learn.



Implementation of Best Practices

In order to have an impact on the learning process and achieve the goal of improving students' reading skills, the reading method used must match the students' abilities and interests. To address the current needs, one of the methods for teaching the fundamentals of reading that can be used is the fast reading method. Hopefully, this method will help SSEN improve his/ her reading skills.

The fast reading method is a simple method that employs a syllable recognition system that has been simplified through the use of imagination and sound-speech techniques, in which students do not have to say the letters and phonetic sounds of the letters being read. There is no need for the students to learn to spell as they will straight away sound out the syllables. Students who do not know the alphabet can also learn to read using this method. Figure 1 shows a table that explains the reading modules that were used.

Figure 1
Fast Read Methods Module Table

Reading Module	Module example	Reading activities
Module 1	<p>Terus dibunyikan. Jangan dieja</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Uses open syllables that end in the vowel 'a.' As shown in the diagram, each syllable has a picture to provide a clue. When students' imaginations have something to help them remember, they are more likely to remember the introduced syllables. After learning the syllables, students are asked to locate the newly learned syllables in the syllable box. This process makes the students to become more aware of syllables. The students then read the syllables in the box one by one. Students are then asked to rewrite the syllables they have learned. Teachers must provide writing examples to ensure that students write correctly.
Module 2	<p>Terus dibunyikan. Jangan dieja</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> This module introduces open syllables that end with the vowels 'i' and 'u'. This module employs sound blocks and must be mastered in order for the students to easily remember new syllables, such as "a, i u" followed by "ba, bi, bu." If "ca"? To improve the student's memory, syllable reading exercises are given. Exercises in syllable writing are also provided.
Module 3	<p>Terus dibunyikan. Jangan dieja</p> 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> In this module, open syllables with the vowels 'e' and 'o' are introduced. 3 new syllable sounds are introduced, all of which ends with the vowels 'e tailing', 'e pepet' and 'o'. Before introducing syllables, this module requires mastery of sound patterns. Introduce students to the distinction between the 'e tailing' and 'e pepet' sounds. When students frequently repeat the same words, they will gain proficiency. To improve the student's memory, exercises in reading words and sentences are given. Exercises in syllable writing are also provided.

Reading Module	Module example	Reading activities																																																																				
Module 4	<p>Perhatikan bunyinya.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="451 349 746 439"> <tr><td>ai</td><td>ai</td><td>ai</td><td>ai</td><td>ai</td><td>ai</td></tr> <tr><td>bai</td><td>cai</td><td>dai</td><td>fai</td><td>gai</td><td>hai</td></tr> <tr><td>jai</td><td>kai</td><td>lai</td><td>mai</td><td>nai</td><td>pai</td></tr> <tr><td>rai</td><td>sai</td><td>tai</td><td>wai</td><td>zai</td><td></td></tr> </table> <table border="1" data-bbox="451 456 746 591"> <tr><td>kedai</td><td>hilai</td><td>abai</td></tr> <tr><td>lebai</td><td>balai</td><td>wahai</td></tr> <tr><td>sesuai</td><td>inai</td><td>memakai</td></tr> <tr><td>cabai</td><td>sakai</td><td>zairi</td></tr> <tr><td>usai</td><td>dawai</td><td>tupai</td></tr> <tr><td>sebagai</td><td>hairi</td><td>tairu</td></tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • saya memakai baju biru dibeli ibu di kedai zaini. • ibu beli tapai di gerai cabai. 	ai	ai	ai	ai	ai	ai	bai	cai	dai	fai	gai	hai	jai	kai	lai	mai	nai	pai	rai	sai	tai	wai	zai		kedai	hilai	abai	lebai	balai	wahai	sesuai	inai	memakai	cabai	sakai	zairi	usai	dawai	tupai	sebagai	hairi	tairu	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Syllables with diphthong and paired vowels are introduced in this module. ii. The sounding technique is used to help students recognise the introduced syllables, such as "a-ai, ba-bai, ca-cai," and so on. iii. This module serves as an introduction. If the student has not mastered it, he or she can proceed to the next module because syllables with diphthong and paired vowels are frequently used in the following module. iv. There are also writing exercises. 																										
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Subject of Study

The subjects of the study were eight students from Class Anugerah 2 who attended KKS RPK Year 2. Five guidance teachers and two Student Management Assistants (PPM) taught the students the fast reading method and taught them to read independently based on their reading levels.

Instrument of Investigation

The following research tools were used:

1. The Year 1 Malay Reading Literacy Screening Instrument is used to screen and determine the reading level of students.
2. A Reading Literacy Board that is pasted in the classroom to record students' reading progress. Every time a student succeeds in reading under the specified conditions, he or she receives a token. When the student has accumulated a total of ten tokens, the teacher will give the student a gift as an encouragement to continue trying to learn to read.

Research Procedure

This study is conducted throughout the year on every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday for 30 minutes during the first hour. Under the supervision of the teacher, students will read using their respective modules.

The following are the teaching steps that were taken:

i. Screening Level

Pupils take a diagnostic test that includes activities such as recognising specific letters, saying open syllables (CV), saying closed syllables (CVC), and reading simple sentences or texts. Following that, the teacher determines which module the student needs to learn to read. If a student fails, Reading Module 1 will be used.

ii. Recovery at Level 1

At this level, the students will learn to read using the reading module that has been assigned based on the screening level results. At this level, students' abilities vary depending on their level of acquisition and competence. If the student has not mastered the reading level, it will be repeated. A token will be given to the student who excels at reading. After successfully collecting ten tokens, they will receive a prize as a reward for their efforts.

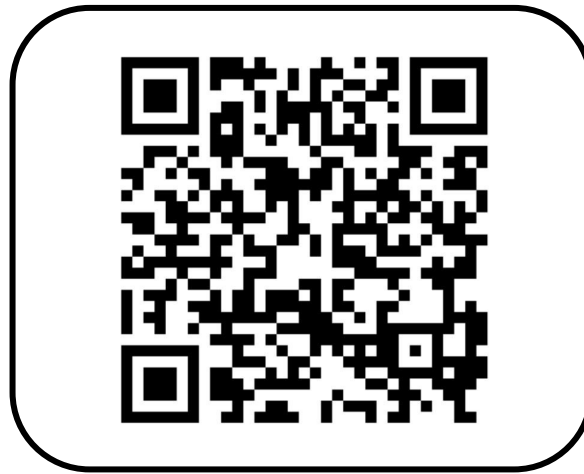
iii. Recovery at Level 2

Students who successfully complete all modules advance to recovery level 2, where they must read simple sentences and short essay excerpts. Tokens are also given to students who successfully read.

Effectiveness from the Implementation of Best Practices

The findings of this best practise demonstrate that the use of the fast reading method can assist the students in overcoming their reading difficulties. The tokens given excites and encourages the students to continue learning to read. The video below is an example of a Reading Literacy Program activity that has been completed.

Figure 2
A Video on Reading using the Fast Reading Method



i. Improve Their Reading Comprehension.

According to the teacher's observations, the students can improve their reading ability by using the fast reading method. Students can learn to read in a fun environment without feeling stressed by using this method. The content is also structured, and the reading method is interesting and in relation to the student's reading level and readiness.

As shown in Figure 3, the number of tokens obtained on the Reading Literacy Board proves that each students' reading proficiency level has been successfully improved. This token motivates them to keep trying to read. As shown in Figure 4, students who successfully collect 10 tokens will be given a gift as a reward for their efforts in learning to read.

Figure 3
Token Board for Reading Literacy



Figure 4
Students who collect 10 tokens



ii. Encourage Self-Esteem and An Interest in Reading and Learning.

Students were less interested in learning before this practise because all subjects required them to read. They used to dislike reading instructions when answering written questions and instead they may not answer the question or copy their friends' answer. However, students have gained confidence and enthusiasm for learning after the Reading Literacy Program is implemented. Their participation in classroom activities has also been increasing.

Interviews with parents and teachers involved in this good practise revealed that they were pleased with the improvement in the student's reading skill, even if it was a minor improvement. The following are the interview questions and response :

"What changes did you notice after the Reading Literacy Program was implemented?"

a) The parents

"My son appears to enjoy going to school. He is easy to wake up in the morning, compared to before this (where he throws) tantrums and his difficulty in waking up."

"Thank you for teaching my son to read, teacher. Although he cannot recognize alphabet and speak fluently, he can learn to read."

b) Teacher

"Every time they read, the students look forward to receiving tokens. Some of them are also competing to get the most stars. This indirectly makes them focused in learning to read."

"There is a student who does not know the letters and his pronunciation has a British accent, but he can read using the fast reading method." This student will try to get a token every time he learns to read; otherwise, he will ask to read again until he passes."

Conclusion and Recommendations

The fast reading method is a best practice that can help students improve their reading skills. This method can also boost the students' self-esteem in all activities, particularly Malay subjects. This module, which is the Ekspres-i Learning Book, was founded by Norli Manan, better known as Bonda Nor, and is written in a structured and organised manner. The Reading Literacy Token Board is extremely effective in encouraging students to continue reading and serves as a catalyst for students to compete for the most tokens.

It is suggested that this fast reading method could be adapted into an app by using Android devices to promote interactive learning. Students will become more excited because interactive games are more enjoyable. The Apps in Ainroid is also one of the teaching methods that is thought to be appropriate for today's educational needs. Its usage is able to influence the effectiveness of teachers' instructions and students' mastery of reading skills.

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