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Improving The Reading Comprehension Skills Of Year 4 Pupils Through Picture Stories In The Indonesian Language Subject At State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-District, Bungo Regency

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Abstract

This research was motivated by the low reading comprehension skills of fourth-grade students at State Elementary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu District, Bungo Regency. This study aimed to improve students' reading comprehension skills through the use of picture stories in Indonesian language lessons. The research used Classroom Action Research (CAR) and was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The subjects were 16 fourth-grade students. Data collection techniques were observation, tests, and documentation. The results showed that the use of picture stories can improve students' reading comprehension skills. In the pre-cycle, the average student score was 58 with a learning completion rate of 35%. In the first cycle, this increased to 72 with a completion rate of 75%, and in the second cycle, it increased to 86 with a completion rate of 87%. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of picture stories can improve fourth-grade students' reading comprehension skills in Indonesian language lessons.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Picture Stories, Indonesian Language, CAR.

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INTRODUCTION

Education aims to improve the quality of human resources so that they are able to keep pace with the changing times. In the educational process at primary school, reading is one of the fundamental skills that pupils must possess, as it is the gateway to acquiring knowledge. The aim of Indonesian language teaching in primary schools is to enable pupils to communicate effectively and correctly, both orally and in writing. One of the key skills in learning Indonesian is reading comprehension.

Reading comprehension is the ability to understand the content of a text so that one can identify key information from it. Based on observations carried out at State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency, it was found that the reading comprehension skills of Year 4 pupils remain low. This is evident from the pupils' low marks in Indonesian Language. Many pupils are still unable to understand the content of the reading material, identify the main ideas, or answer questions based on the text.

Pupils' low reading comprehension skills are caused by several factors, such as a lack of interest in reading, the use of unengaging teaching materials, and teaching methods that remain monotonous. Therefore, teaching materials are needed that can capture pupils' attention, encouraging them to be more active and making it easier for them to understand what they read. One medium that can be used is a picture story. A picture story is a learning medium that presents text accompanied by pictures, thereby helping pupils to understand the content of the text more easily and in a more engaging way. The inclusion of pictures makes pupils more interested in reading and understanding the story. In light of these issues, the researcher was motivated to conduct a study entitled "Improving the Reading Comprehension Skills of Year 4 Pupils through Picture Stories in the Indonesian Language Subject at State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency".

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) project. The research was conducted at State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency. The research subjects were 16 Year 4 pupils. The research was conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consisted of four stages, namely: Planning, Implementation of Interventions, Observation and Reflection. The data collection techniques used included: Observation, Testing and Documentation. The research instruments comprised observation sheets for teacher and pupil activities, as well as reading comprehension test questions.

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This study employed a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach based on the Kemmis and McTaggart model, which comprises four stages: planning, implementation, observation and reflection. The research was conducted at State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency, during the odd semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

The research subjects were 16 Year 4 pupils. Data were collected through observation, interviews, tests and documentation. The data were analysed using both qualitative and quantitative methods to determine the improvement in the pupils' reading comprehension skills.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The research findings indicate that the use of picture storybooks can improve pupils' reading comprehension skills. At the outset, the majority of pupils had not yet achieved the minimum pass mark. Following the introduction of picture storybooks, pupils became more active and engaged in the learning process. Improvements in reading skills are evident in pupils' ability to: understand the content of a text; identify the main ideas; answer questions based on the text; summarise the content of a text; and interpret difficult words. Picture storybooks help pupils understand the content of a story through engaging illustrations, making the learning process more enjoyable and effective. Research findings indicate that the use of picture storybooks can improve the reading comprehension skills of Year 4 pupils at SD Negeri 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency.

Initially, pupils' poor reading comprehension was due to a lack of interest in reading and the use of unengaging teaching methods. Pupils found it difficult to understand the content of the text, identify the main ideas, and answer questions based on the text.

Following the introduction of picture stories, pupils became more engaged in their learning. The illustrations in the stories helped pupils to understand the text more easily. Picture stories also helped to increase pupils' attention and motivation in learning, as lessons became more enjoyable and less tedious. Improvements in reading comprehension are evident in the pupils' ability to:

1. Read texts more fluently and clearly.
2. Answer questions based on the content of the text.
3. Identify the main idea in each paragraph.
4. Summarise the content of the text in their own words.
5. Interpret difficult words in the text.

The findings of this study are consistent with the theory that picture books can help pupils

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understand learning material through a combination of text and images. Engaging images stimulate pupils' thinking and imagination, thereby making the process of understanding the text easier. Thus, the use of picture stories has proven effective in improving pupils' reading comprehension skills in Indonesian Language lessons in Year 4 at SD Negeri 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency.

Pre-cycle

During the pre-cycle stage, before any intervention was implemented, the researcher first conducted a pre-cycle test to assess the pupils' initial reading comprehension skills. The results of the pre-cycle test revealed that the pupils' reading comprehension skills were still relatively low. Of the 16 pupils, only 8 achieved the minimum passing mark, with a class-level achievement rate of 35 per cent, whilst the class-level retention rate stood at just 58 per cent. These findings indicate that pupils' reading comprehension skills need to be improved through the use of engaging teaching materials that are suited to the characteristics of primary school pupils. Pupils' reading comprehension skills remain low. Of the 16 pupils, only 8 achieved the pass mark. The class average score was 58, with a pass rate of 35 per cent.

Results of Cycle I

The activities in Cycle I were carried out using picture stories as a teaching aid in the Indonesian language learning process. The teacher presented engaging picture stories, after which the pupils were asked to read them, understand the content, identify the main ideas, and answer questions based on the text. During the implementation phase, the pupils appeared to become increasingly engaged in the lesson, as the pictures helped them to understand the story's content. However, there are still some pupils who are not very active and have not yet been able to fully understand the text.

The results of the evaluation in Cycle I showed an improvement compared with the initial situation. The pupils' average mark was 72, with a classical achievement rate of 68 per cent. Although there was an improvement, these results did not yet meet the set success indicator of 75 per cent.

Based on the findings from Cycle I, several challenges were identified, including:

1. Some pupils still find it difficult to identify the main ideas in a text.
2. Some pupils are not yet able to summarise the content of a story effectively.
3. Pupils still lack confidence in expressing their understanding of a text.

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Consequently, the researchers reflected on the teaching process with a view to improving it. In Cycle I, the teacher used picture stories as teaching aids in reading lessons. The pupils appeared more enthusiastic about the lessons. The test results showed an improvement in the pupils' reading comprehension skills. The pupils' average mark rose to 72, with a pass rate of 75 per cent. However, there are still some pupils who are not very active and have not yet fully understood the reading material. Therefore, improvements were made in Cycle II.

Results of Cycle II

In Cycle II, the researchers improved the learning process by providing more intensive guidance to the pupils, clarifying the use of picture storybooks, and motivating the pupils to be more active in reading and discussing. The delivery of lessons in Cycle II showed an improvement compared with the previous cycle. The pupils appeared more active and enthusiastic, and found it easier to understand the text with the help of the illustrations in the stories. Furthermore, the pupils began to be able to answer questions in their own words and identify key information in the text. The results of the evaluation in Cycle II showed a significant improvement. The pupils' average mark rose to 86, with the percentage of pupils achieving the required standard reaching 87 per cent.

These results indicate that the research success indicators have been met. In Cycle II, the teacher improved the learning process by providing clearer explanations and increasing pupil interaction during reading activities. The research results showed a significant improvement. The pupils' average mark rose to 86, with a pass rate of 87 per cent. This improvement indicates that the use of picture stories helps pupils to understand the content of the text more effectively. Engaging illustrations help pupils to focus better and understand the information in the text more easily.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the use of picture storybooks can improve the reading comprehension skills of Year 4 pupils in Indonesian Language lessons at State Primary School 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency. This improvement is evident from the pupils' average marks and the percentage of pupils achieving the learning outcomes in each cycle. Picture storybooks make pupils more active, engaged and better able to understand the content of the text.

The use of picture storybooks can improve the reading comprehension skills of Year 4

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pupils in Indonesian Language lessons at SD Negeri 155/II Tagan, Bathin III Ulu Sub-district, Bungo Regency. Picture storybooks can also boost pupils' interest, motivation and engagement in the learning process.

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