

The Use of Contextual-Based Poster Media to Improve Reading Fluency of Fifth-Grade Elementary School Students with Learning Difficulties

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to use contextual poster media to help fifth-grade elementary school students with learning disabilities improve their reading fluency. The low reading fluency of the students—which was demonstrated by issues with accuracy, fluency, reading pace, and prosody, including word mispronunciation, reluctant reading, and improper intonation—was the driving force for the study. The Kemmis and McTaggart approach was used in this study's two cycles of Classroom Action Research (CAR). Two fifth-grade kids with learning disabilities, designated as SL and AS, served as the research subjects. Tests of reading fluency, documentation, and observation were used to gather data. Reading fluency assessments and observation sheets for teacher and student activities made up the research tools. The pre-action, Cycle I, and Cycle II outcomes were compared in order to analyze the data using descriptive qualitative and quantitative methods. The achievement of the predefined reading fluency metrics was used to determine the action's success. The results demonstrated that students' reading fluency was enhanced by the usage of contextual poster media. While student AS's reading fluency score rose from 74% to 93%, student SL's grew from 66% in Cycle I to 83% in Cycle II. Additionally, during the learning process, students' interest, participation, and self-confidence all showed improvements. Thus, it can be said that fifth-grade elementary school pupils with learning disabilities were able to increase their reading fluency through the usage of contextual poster media.

Keywords: *Reading Fluency, Contextual Poster Media, Learning Difficulties, Elementary School*

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INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the language skills that plays an important role in the learning process in elementary schools. Through reading activities, students acquire information, understand learning concepts, and develop thinking skills that support academic success in various subjects. Reading is not only related to the ability to recognize letters and words, but it also involves a complex mental process in understanding, interpreting, and constructing meaning from the text being read so that the information obtained can be used appropriately in learning activities (Rosdiana et al., 2022). Reading is the process of obtaining messages conveyed by the author through written language with the aim of understanding the information contained in the reading (Sudaryati et al., 2023).

At the elementary school level, especially in grade V, students' reading abilities are expected to have developed from the learning to read stage to reading to learn. At this stage, students no longer merely recognize words, but already use reading activities as a means to obtain knowledge from various learning sources (Nukman, 2021). Students in grade V are generally 10–11 years old and are at the concrete operational stage, where they are able to think logically about real things and connect new information with past experiences (Syafnita, 2022). Students in grade V are expected to be able to read texts fluently, understand the main ideas, and find important information in the reading (Lestari, 2024). One of the important reading abilities for students to possess is reading fluency. Reading fluency includes reading accuracy, reading fluency, appropriate reading speed, and the use of proper intonation and expression so that students can understand the reading content well (Chandra, 2024). Students who can read fluently tend to be better able to understand texts, find important information, and successfully complete learning tasks. Vocabulary mastery is also an essential factor, as students who know more words can read more quickly and accurately because they do not experience difficulties in recognizing or understanding the words in the reading (Pattiasina dkk., 2023; Rosdiana dkk., 2025).

One group of students who often experiences difficulties in reading is those with learning difficulties. Reading learning difficulty is a condition where students experience obstacles in recognizing letters, connecting letters with sounds, reading words, reading sentences, and understanding the information contained in the text, causing their reading abilities to be below the expected proficiency level (Aprilia Astri & N., 2024). Students who experience reading difficulties often make mistakes in word pronunciation, read haltingly, omit or substitute words, have a low reading speed, pay little attention to punctuation, and experience difficulties in understanding the reading content (Aprilia Astri & N., 2024). Reading abilities are influenced by



physiological, intellectual, psychological, and environmental factors (Sudaryati et al., 2023). Internal factors affecting reading difficulties include a low ability to recognize letters, limited vocabulary mastery, low learning motivation, and a lack of interest in reading. Meanwhile, external factors include a lack of family support, limited reading materials, and the use of learning methods and media that are less suited to the students' characteristics (Nasution & H., 2023).

Based on initial observations conducted by the researcher in a grade V elementary school classroom, it was found that there are still students who experience reading learning difficulties. The visible obstacles include students still spelling, frequently repeating words, making mistakes in word pronunciation, reading at a slow tempo, and paying little attention to intonation and punctuation when reading. Teachers have made various efforts to help improve students' reading abilities through shared reading activities, providing reading exercises, and using reading books available at school. However, these efforts have not provided optimal results because some students still show obstacles in reading fluently. One of the causes is the lack of engaging learning media capable of connecting reading materials with students' real experiences.

Learning for students with learning difficulties needs to be adapted to their characteristics, generally requiring concrete and visual media, step-by-step guidance, material repetition, and continuous reinforcement (Amka, 2021). Visual media can increase student engagement in the learning process, which ultimately impacts the improvement of learning outcomes (Batubara, 2025). One type of media that can be used is posters. Poster media is a form of visual learning media that combines images, text, and colors simply to convey learning messages concisely and engagingly (Akbar, 2023). Posters can change abstract concepts into more concrete ones so they are more easily understood by students, as well as increase students' active involvement in the learning process (Shoffa, 2023).

To make the use of posters more meaningful, this media can be combined with the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) approach. Contextual learning emphasizes the connection between learning materials and students' real lives so that students can understand the material through experiences close to their environment (Mashudi, 2020). CTL allows students to connect academic knowledge with real experiences so that learning is not only theoretical but also applicable in everyday life (Utaminingsih, 2019). Through the use of contextual-based poster media, students not only read the text found on the poster, but also connect the reading content with everyday experiences so that the reading process becomes more engaging, meaningful, and easy to understand. The application of CTL can improve students' reading comprehension skills because the reading content is connected to students' real experiences (Rosmi, 2024). The syntax



of reading learning based on CTL with poster media includes orientation and activation of prior knowledge, reading modeling by the teacher, reading activities by students, discussion and collaboration, application of understanding, and reflection and authentic assessment (Mashudi, 2020; Mazrur, 2021). The use of visual media such as posters in contextual learning effectively improves the reading abilities of students, especially students with learning difficulties (Herlina, 2025).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) which aims to improve students' reading fluency through the use of contextual-based poster media for fifth-grade elementary school students with learning difficulties. This study uses quantitative and qualitative approaches. The CAR model used refers to Kemmis and McTaggart which consists of four stages, namely planning, implementing action, observation, and reflection which are carried out in cycles until the success indicators are achieved. This research was conducted at SDN 007 Malinau Kota, located in Pelita Kanaan Village, Malinau Kota District, Malinau Regency, North Kalimantan Province, during the even semester of the 2025/2026 academic year.

The subjects in this study were all fifth-grade students of SDN 007 Malinau Kota, totaling 6 people. However, the focus subjects described in this study are 2 students who experience reading fluency difficulties based on initial observations and pre-action reading test results, namely SL and AS. The research was conducted in two cycles, namely cycle I and cycle II, where cycle II was implemented as a follow-up improvement based on the reflection results in cycle I. The implementation of the action was carried out through learning using contextual-based poster media with the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) learning syntax.

Data collection in this study used test, observation, and interview techniques. The test used is a performance test to measure students' reading fluency through reading texts found on contextual-based poster media, assessing aspects of accuracy, fluency, reading rate, and prosody. Observations were conducted systematically using observation sheets to obtain data regarding student activities, student attitudes, and the implementation of the use of contextual-based poster media by the teacher during the learning process. Interviews were conducted in a semi-structured manner with the class teacher and students to obtain supporting information regarding the initial conditions of reading ability, difficulties experienced, and responses to the use of the media.

The data analysis techniques used in this study are quantitative descriptive and qualitative



descriptive statistics. Quantitative descriptive statistics are used to analyze data from students' reading fluency test results, while qualitative descriptive is used to analyze data from observations and reflective discussions. To increase the validity of the research data, a triangulation technique is used by comparing data obtained from performance tests, written tests, student response observations, attitude observations, teacher observations, and documentation. The action is declared successful if each subject obtains a reading fluency score of ≥ 70 according to the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP) set by the school, shows an improvement in reading fluency in each cycle, and the observation results of the learning process reach a minimum category of "Good".

RESEARCH RESULTS

Results

Prior to the implementation of the action, students' initial reading fluency was measured using informative texts presented through contextual-based poster media. The pre-action assessment revealed that both focus subjects, SL and AS, failed to meet the Learning Objective Achievement Criteria (KKTP) of ≥ 70 . The identified difficulties included reading by spelling word by word, frequent pauses, slow reading speed, flat intonation, and poor reading comprehension.

Table 1. Pre-Action Reading Fluency Results

No	Subject	Maximum Score	Obtained Score	Percentage
1	SL	80	32	40%
2	AS	80	35	44%

Cycle I was implemented over four meetings focusing on the "Saving Water" theme. The observation of the learning activities indicated a progressive improvement in the execution of the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) syntax by the teacher.

Table 2. Observation Results of Learning Activities in Cycle I

Observation	Total Score	Obtained Score	Percentage
Meeting 1	48	30	63%
Meeting 2	48	35	73%
Meeting 3	48	38	79%
Meeting 4	48	42	88%



Average			76%
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Student participation demonstrated a positive trend during Cycle I. SL initially showed hesitation but gradually actively participated in reading and discussions, while AS consistently engaged in modeling and responding to questions.

Table 3. Observation Results of Student Participation in Cycle I

Subject	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3	Meeting 4	Average
SL	63%	73%	79%	88%	76%
AS	65%	75%	81%	89%	78%

The post-test for Cycle I showed improvements in both accuracy and fluency, yet neither student reached the established target of 70%. Both subjects continued to experience difficulties maintaining fluency on longer sentences and applying appropriate intonation.

Table 4. Cycle I Reading Fluency Test Results

No	Subject	Maximum Score	Obtained Score	Percentage
1	SL	80	48	60%
2	AS	80	52	65%

Cycle II adjusted the intervention by intensifying individual guidance and utilizing posters with the "Clean and Healthy Living" theme. The implementation of learning activities using contextual-based posters reached an optimal level, marked by higher student engagement.

Table 5. Observation Results of Learning Implementation in Cycle II

Subject	Meeting 1	Meeting 2	Meeting 3	Meeting 4	Average
SL	78%	85%	90%	94%	87%
AS	85%	90%	93%	95%	91%

The final reading fluency test in Cycle II confirmed that both subjects successfully exceeded the revised action success criteria of $\geq 80\%$.



Table 6. Post-Action Reading Fluency Test Results in Cycle II

No	Subject	Maximum Score	Obtained Score	Percentage
1	SL	80	66	83%
2	AS	80	74	93%

The comparison between the two cycles highlights a significant jump in reading capabilities after the pedagogical adjustments were applied.

Table 7. Comparison of Reading Fluency Post-Test Results between Cycle I and Cycle II

Subject Name	Cycle I Post-test Score	Cycle II Post-test Score	Improvement
SL	66%	83%	17%
AS	74%	93%	19%

DISCUSSIONS

Student Responses to Contextual-Based Poster Media

The integration of contextual-based poster media featuring themes like "Clean and Healthy Living" triggered highly positive responses from the students. The presence of clear visual elements combined with short, relatable texts captured students' attention and elevated their motivation to participate in reading sessions. During Cycle II, students actively examined the posters, practiced reading both independently and alternately, and engaged deeply in discussions extracting the posters' core messages. The contextual approach bridged the gap between abstract texts and students' daily reality. Instead of merely decoding letters, students correlated the visual information with their personal experiences at home and school. This phenomenon directly aligns with the Contextual Teaching and Learning (CTL) framework, which asserts that learning achieves maximum meaning when students can link academic materials to real-world contexts. The visual nature of the posters simplified complex information, accelerating both reading fluency and reading comprehension simultaneously.

Effective Learning Stages in Improving Reading Fluency

The pedagogical stages that yielded the highest impact on reading fluency were teacher modeling, reading aloud, and repeated reading practice. The modeling phase provided students with a concrete auditory and visual target. By observing the teacher's pronunciation, tempo, and



intonation, students acquired a clear standard for accurate reading. The subsequent reading aloud and repeated reading phases served as the primary mechanism for breaking the habit of spelling word-by-word. Continuous, structured repetition conditioned the students to recognize vocabulary automatically, drastically reducing unnecessary pauses and errors. This process directly enhanced their reading rate. Furthermore, discussing the poster's content and presenting the findings required students to internalize the text, which naturally led to the application of appropriate prosody—pauses, intonation, and expressions—when reading aloud.

The Teacher's Role in Overcoming Learning Difficulties

The teacher's function shifted entirely from a passive information provider to an active facilitator and intensive guide. During Cycle I, the generalized approach proved insufficient for students with severe reading difficulties, as they still struggled with long sentences and correct intonation. Recognizing this gap, the teacher implemented intensive individual guidance in Cycle II. The teacher actively provided direct, immediate corrections when students mispronounced words, guided them word-by-word during difficult passages, and modeled specific expressions repeatedly. This persistent and personalized scaffolding reduced students' anxiety and fear of making mistakes. The consistent positive reinforcement gradually built their confidence, empowering them to read aloud in front of their peers without hesitation.

Trajectory of Reading Fluency Improvement

The progression of reading skills across the research timeline demonstrates the necessity of adaptive teaching. In the pre-action phase, the students exhibited severe deficiencies across all four fluency indicators: accuracy, fluency, reading rate, and prosody. Cycle I introduced the contextual posters and showed immediate positive effects, yet the students failed to reach the 70% threshold due to lingering issues with sentence continuity and flat intonation. The critical turning point occurred in Cycle II following structural adjustments: the posters were redesigned for better clarity, the reading material was brought closer to students' immediate daily habits, and individual guidance was heavily prioritized. These adjustments catalyzed a sharp increase in performance. Students stopped spelling out words, maintained a consistent reading rhythm, and applied natural expressions relevant to the text. The final assessment validated this approach, with SL reaching 83% and AS achieving 93%, proving that contextual visual media paired with targeted scaffolding effectively resolves reading fluency difficulties in elementary education.



CONCLUSION

Reflective narrative stories serve as an alternative learning method capable of helping children with learning difficulties understand the concept of faith. Through storytelling activities, personal experiences, and reflection, students find it easier to internalize faith values and implement them in their daily lives. Research results demonstrate that reflective narrative stories make it easier for students to understand faith material, as true stories of biblical figures are connected to students' experiences so they can recognize God's love, help, and intervention in their lives. Based on these findings, the application of the reflective narrative story method to students with learning difficulties at SDN 002 Malinau Selatan Hilir is able to improve their ability to recognize and understand the concept of faith.

The classroom action research, which was divided into two cycles, showed an improvement in test results for the three students with learning difficulties. The initial test and Cycle I scores still did not meet the completeness standard, but after participating in the learning process in Cycle II, all students obtained an average score of 80 and successfully exceeded the completeness limit. Changes were not only seen in the test results, as the three students began to have the courage to express their opinions and share the faith experiences they encountered when facing various difficulties. They were also able to connect God's help with real events as a form of the belief they possess.

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