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Improving the Beginning Reading Skills of Slow Learner Students Through the Use of Animated Audio-Visual Media Powtoon in Indonesian Language Learning at Advent Elementary School (SD)

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Abstract: *Improving the Beginning Reading Skills of Slow Learner Students Through the Use of Animated Audio-Visual Media Powtoon in Indonesian Language Learning at Advent Elementary School (SD) Sangatta, East Kutai, East Kalimantan." This study acknowledges several methodological limitations. The small sample size of four first-grade students at SD Advent Sangatta limits generalizability to broader populations and diverse educational contexts. The single-site research design means findings may not apply to schools with different resources, teaching cultures, or demographics. With only two cycles of Classroom Action Research, long-term retention and sustained effectiveness of Powtoon media could not be assessed. The absence of a control group makes it difficult to attribute improvements solely to Powtoon rather than other variables such as increased teacher attention or novelty effects. Additionally, focusing exclusively on first-grade students leaves questions about Powtoon's effectiveness for higher grades unanswered.*

Practical implementation factors present further limitations. The intervention's dependence on digital devices, internet connectivity, and technical skills may not be feasible in rural or under-resourced Indonesian schools. As the teacher-researcher conducted both instruction and evaluation, potential subjective interpretation exists despite multiple data collection methods. Moreover, grouping all participants as "slow learners" without differentiating specific learning challenges may have obscured varied individual responses to the intervention.

Future research should address these limitations through several approaches. Conducting studies with larger sample sizes across multiple schools in different Indonesian regions would enhance generalizability. Implementing longitudinal studies spanning an entire academic year would evaluate long-term skill retention. Utilizing experimental designs with control groups would enable rigorous comparisons. Investigating cross-grade applications, differentiating learning profiles, exploring teacher variables, and examining cost-effectiveness would provide deeper insights. Finally, assessing accessibility factors and cultural adaptations across Indonesia's diverse landscape would contribute to more inclusive, contextually appropriate teaching practices for students with special educational needs.

Keywords: Audio-visual, *Early reading, Indonesian language learning, Powtoon media, Slow learner.*

INTRODUCTION

This study, while demonstrating promising results in improving beginning reading skills among slow learner students, acknowledges several methodological limitations that warrant consideration. The limited sample size of only four first-grade students restricts the generalizability of findings to broader populations and diverse educational

contexts. Additionally, the research was conducted exclusively at SD Advent Sangatta in East Kutai, meaning the findings may not be directly applicable to schools with different infrastructural resources, teaching cultures, or student demographics. The temporal and methodological scope also presents limitations. With only two cycles of Classroom Action Research, the study could not assess the long-term retention of reading skills or the sustained effectiveness of Powtoon media. The absence of a control group makes it challenging to definitively attribute improvements solely to Powtoon media rather than to other variables such as increased teacher attention or the novelty effect. Furthermore, the intervention's dependence on digital devices and internet connectivity may not be feasible in all Indonesian schools, particularly in rural or under-resourced areas. To address these limitations, several recommendations are proposed for future investigations. Researchers should expand the research scope by conducting studies with larger sample sizes across multiple schools in different regions of Indonesia. Implementing longitudinal studies spanning an entire academic year or longer would enable evaluation of long-term retention. Additionally, utilizing experimental designs with control groups would enable more rigorous comparisons about Powtoon's effectiveness. Further research should investigate cross-grade applications, differentiate between types of learning difficulties, and explore how teacher training influences successful implementation. Finally, conducting cost-effectiveness analyses and investigating cultural adaptations would contribute to more inclusive and contextually appropriate teaching practices for students with special educational needs.

Furthermore, despite the legal mandates outlined in Law Number 20 of 2003 and Ministerial Regulation Number 48 of 2023 requiring inclusive educational accommodations, there is insufficient practical guidance on implementing engaging, technology-based interventions that address the unique phonemic and literacy challenges faced by slow learners in the Indonesian educational system. Traditional remedial approaches, such as extended after-school sessions and simplified reading materials, have shown limited effectiveness at Advent Elementary School Sangatta, highlighting the urgent need for innovative, evidence-based instructional strategies that can enhance both learning engagement and outcomes for this vulnerable student population.

Therefore, this research aims to address these gaps by investigating how Powtoon animated audio-visual media can effectively improve beginning reading skills among slow learners at Advent Elementary School Sangatta within the context of Indonesian language learning. This study seeks to provide empirical evidence on the effectiveness of culturally appropriate, technology-enhanced instruction specifically designed for slow learners struggling with phonemic awareness and letter-sound associations.

Theoretical Contributions

This study makes several significant theoretical contributions to the fields of special education, literacy development, and educational technology. First, it extends the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning by examining how the dual-coding principle applies specifically to slow learner students in an Indonesian linguistic and cultural context, providing empirical validation of how synchronized audio-visual presentations can reduce cognitive load and enhance phonemic awareness among students with learning difficulties. Second, the research contributes to inclusive education theory by demonstrating how technology-mediated instruction can bridge the gap between legal mandates for educational equity and actual classroom implementation, offering a theoretical framework for understanding the mechanisms through which animated media supports differentiated instruction for diverse learners. Third, this study adds to the body of knowledge on Classroom Action Research methodology by illustrating how iterative cycles of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection can be effectively utilized to develop and refine technology-based interventions tailored to the specific needs of slow learners in resource-limited settings.

Practical Contributions

Practically, this research offers valuable contributions to educators, school administrators, and policymakers. First, it provides concrete evidence-based strategies for teachers working with slow learner students, demonstrating how Powtoon animated media can be integrated into daily Indonesian language instruction to improve beginning reading outcomes, student engagement, and learning motivation. Second, the study offers a replicable intervention model that can be adapted and implemented in other elementary schools across Indonesia facing similar challenges with slow learner populations, thereby contributing to more inclusive and equitable educational practices nationwide. Third, the research provides practical guidance for schools with limited resources by demonstrating how accessible, user-friendly technology tools like Powtoon can be effectively utilized without requiring extensive technical expertise or expensive infrastructure. Fourth, the findings inform teacher professional development programs by identifying the specific competencies and pedagogical approaches needed to successfully implement technology-enhanced instruction for students with special educational needs. Finally, this study contributes to policy implementation by offering empirical support for translating legal requirements for inclusive education into actionable, effective classroom practices that genuinely improve learning outcomes for Indonesia's most vulnerable

student populations.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses Classroom Action Research (CAR) aimed at improving the beginning reading skills of slow learner students through the use of Powtoon-based animated audio-visual media. CAR was selected because it is designed to improve classroom teaching practices by applying specific interventions or actions that can enhance student learning outcomes. Classroom Action Research refers to the implementation of Powtoon animated audio-visual media as an intervention to support students who struggle with early reading skills. The research will be conducted in cycles consisting of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The results of each cycle will be used to refine the actions in the following cycle until optimal outcomes are achieved.

This study investigated the use of Powtoon animated audio-visual media as an intervention to improve beginning reading skills among slow learner students. Powtoon combines visual and auditory elements to assist students in understanding reading fundamentals such as letter recognition, phoneme awareness, and simple word decoding. Despite promising results, several methodological limitations warrant consideration. The small sample size of four first-grade slow learners at SD Advent Sangatta limits generalizability to broader populations and diverse educational contexts. The single-site research design in East Kutai means findings may not apply to schools with different infrastructural resources, teaching cultures, or student demographics. With only two cycles of Classroom Action Research, long-term retention and sustained effectiveness of the multimodal intervention could not be assessed. The absence of a control group makes it difficult to attribute improvements solely to Powtoon rather than other variables such as increased teacher attention or novelty effects.

Practical implementation factors present further limitations. The intervention's dependence on digital devices, internet connectivity, and technical skills may not be feasible in rural or under-resourced Indonesian schools. As the teacher-researcher conducted both instruction and evaluation, potential subjective interpretation exists despite multiple data collection methods. Moreover, grouping all participants as "slow learners" without differentiating specific learning challenges may have obscured varied individual responses to the visual-auditory intervention.

Future research should expand sample sizes across multiple schools, implement longitudinal studies, and utilize experimental designs with control groups. Investigating cross-grade applications, differentiating learning profiles, exploring teacher training needs, examining cost-effectiveness, and assessing cultural adaptations across Indonesia's diverse educational landscape would contribute to more inclusive, evidence-based teaching practices for students with special educational needs. This variable refers to the students' early reading ability, which will be measured using pretest and posttest assessments. These tests evaluate students' skills in letter recognition, phonemic discrimination, and reading simple words. The increase in reading ability after the intervention will be analyzed to determine the impact of the treatment. The independent variable (Powtoon media) is the instructional strategy applied to enhance students' reading capabilities. Powtoon is used due to its engaging and interactive presentation style, which aids students in grasping early reading concepts effectively. The dependent variable (beginning reading ability) is the outcome being measured to evaluate the extent to which the use of Powtoon media improves reading skills among slow learners. This includes letter recognition, phonemic awareness, and reading simple vocabulary. This study follows a Classroom Action Research (CAR) design with the purpose of improving slow learners' beginning reading skills through the use of Powtoon animated audio-visual media. CAR is chosen to enable direct and continuous improvement of teaching practices within the classroom, incorporating cycles of reflection and adjustment based on observed outcomes.

Symbol Description

O_1 Pretest (before the intervention) to measure initial reading ability.

X Intervention using Powtoon media in teaching beginning reading.

O_2 Posttest (after the intervention) to measure improvement in reading ability.

The steps taken in this study are aligned with conceptual constructs and the theoretical framework supporting the variables The planned intervention involves using Powtoon animated audio-visual media in teaching beginning reading to slow learners. Phonemic Awareness (Ehri, 2004): The ability to recognize letter sounds and phonemes is fundamental for beginning reading. Visual-Spatial Intelligence (Gardner, 1983): The visual nature of Powtoon media helps stimulate students' ability to recognize letter forms and sounds. In this phase, students will engage in learning sessions using Powtoon, which presents animations that teach beginning reading skills such as letter recognition, phonemes, and reading simple words. Multimedia Learning (Mayer, 2021): The integration of audio and visual elements in media helps enhance student attention and comprehension in the reading process. Observations will be conducted throughout the lessons to record any changes in students' reading ability, engagement, focus, and motivation during their interaction with Powtoon media. The use of animated media like Powtoon is expected to provide scaffolding—or guided support—tailored to each student's level of development. Observation (Sugiyono, 2017) is a data collection technique used to directly monitor behavior, actions, or situations in a specific context. In this research, observation helps evaluate student interaction and engagement with the learning media. After implementation and observation, the researcher will conduct a reflection stage to evaluate the results of the pretest, posttest, and observational data. Reflection (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1988) involves critical thinking to assess the effectiveness of the action taken and to plan necessary adjustments for the next cycle. Reflection includes analysis of both quantitative data (pretest/posttest scores) and qualitative data (observation notes) to determine the success of

the intervention or whether further improvements are needed. This Classroom Action Research will be conducted over several cycles. These repeated cycles allow the researcher to continuously improve the intervention based on findings from each cycle. Multiple cycles may be necessary to ensure optimal progress in improving students' beginning reading skills. To ensure the quality and trustworthiness of data collected in this Classroom Action Research, careful attention was given to the validity and reliability of research instruments. The study employed multiple data collection methods—including pretest/posttest assessments, observation checklists, and reflective journals—each subjected to validation procedures to ensure they accurately measured the intended constructs related to beginning reading skills among slow learner students.

Content validity of the reading assessment instruments was established through expert judgment. The pretest and posttest items, designed to measure letter recognition, phoneme awareness, and simple word decoding skills, were reviewed by experienced elementary education practitioners and a literacy specialist to ensure alignment with first-grade Indonesian language curriculum standards and appropriateness for slow learner students. The observation checklist was similarly validated by experts to confirm that the behavioral indicators accurately reflected student engagement, interaction with Powtoon media, and reading skill development. Feedback from validators led to refinements in item wording, assessment criteria, and scoring rubrics to enhance clarity and relevance.

Construct validity was addressed by ensuring that assessment items genuinely measured beginning reading competencies as defined by established literacy frameworks. The researcher aligned test items with the operational definitions of letter recognition (ability to identify and name alphabet letters), phoneme awareness (capacity to recognize and manipulate sound units), and word decoding (skill in converting written symbols into spoken language). This theoretical grounding helped ensure that the instruments measured authentic reading abilities rather than unrelated cognitive functions.

Instrument reliability was enhanced through several strategies. Inter-rater reliability was established for observational data by having a colleague teacher independently observe and record student behaviors during selected learning sessions, with agreement rates calculated using percentage of agreement formula. For the reading assessments, internal consistency was examined by analyzing the correlation between similar test items measuring the same skill domain. Test-retest reliability considerations were addressed by maintaining consistent testing conditions, clear scoring criteria, and standardized administration procedures across both pretest and posttest phases.

To strengthen overall research validity, the study employed methodological triangulation by combining quantitative data (pretest/posttest scores) with qualitative data (observation notes and reflective journals). This multi-method approach allowed for cross-verification of findings, where improvements in test scores could be corroborated by observed changes in student reading behaviors and engagement patterns. Data source triangulation was also achieved by gathering information from multiple perspectives—student performance data, teacher observations, and student behavioral responses—providing a more comprehensive and credible picture of the intervention's effectiveness.

Despite these efforts, certain limitations must be acknowledged. The small sample size (four students) restricted the ability to conduct sophisticated statistical reliability analyses such as Cronbach's alpha. The dual role of the researcher as both instructor and evaluator introduced potential observer bias, though this was mitigated through structured observation protocols and reflexive journaling. Additionally, the absence of standardized, norm-referenced reading assessments meant that validity was primarily established through expert judgment rather than comparison with established benchmarks. The context-specific nature of the instruments—designed specifically for slow learners at SD Advent Sangatta—may limit their transferability to other settings without further validation.

Recognizing the unique characteristics of Classroom Action Research, this study prioritized practical validity—the extent to which the intervention actually improved student learning in the authentic classroom context. The cyclical nature of the research design, with ongoing reflection and adjustment based on empirical evidence, enhanced the credibility of findings by demonstrating responsiveness to actual classroom dynamics rather than rigid adherence to predetermined protocols. Member checking was informally conducted by discussing observations and interpretations with a fellow teacher to verify accuracy of perceptions and reduce subjective bias.

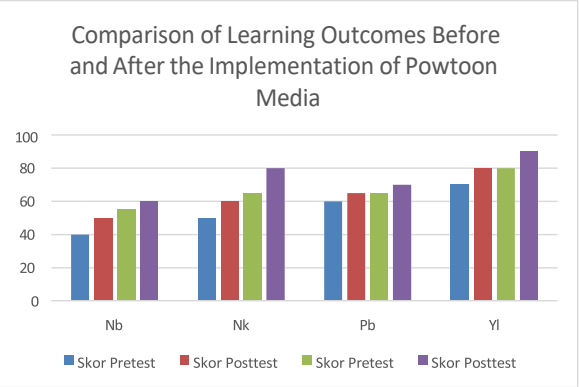
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Result

Before the implementation of audio-visual-based instructional media, a pretest was conducted involving 25 students of Advent Elementary School Sangatta, including 4 identified slow learners. The pretest results indicated that the beginning reading skills of the slow learner students were still at a low level. Their main difficulties were in letter recognition, phoneme differentiation, and reading simple words. The average pretest score of the slow learner students was X, while the other students achieved an average score of Y.

Table 1. Table of Initial Knowledge Results Before Using the Media

Types of tests	Average Score	Description
Pretest	37,5	Average before using Powtoon media
Posttest	66,25	Average after using Powtoon media
Improvement	76.67%	Average score increase after treatment



Interviews were conducted with both students and teachers to gain deeper insights into their perceptions of using Powtoon media in the learning process. Some key findings include that students felt more motivated and enjoyed learning to read with Powtoon, while teachers observed an increase in student engagement and understanding of the material. The challenges faced during the lessons included students' difficulty with focus, as they were easily distracted by their surroundings, the limited availability of devices which hindered concentration, and students' readiness to use digital media. This research was conducted in two distinct cycles due to the observation made by the researcher during the initial phase: two out of four identified slow learner students had not shown significant progress in their ability to read vowels and simple sentences.

This finding prompted the researcher to continue to the second cycle, employing a more intensive methodology incorporating visual media. Dale's theoretical construct of the "Cone of Experience," along with Wirawan's (2020) assertion, supports the idea that students facing educational challenges comprehend material better when it is presented in a concrete and visual form. After the completion of the second cycle, it became evident that all four students demonstrated considerable improvement, making further cycles unnecessary. The implementation of Powtoon learning media, characterized by interactive animated videos, was empirically validated as an effective means of enhancing early reading skills among slow learners. The researcher observed that this medium facilitated students in letter recognition, phoneme differentiation, and reading simple words with greater efficacy.

These results align with Mayer's (2021) multimedia learning framework and are further reinforced by Sukardi (2024), who asserted that animated media significantly increases attention and engagement among slow learner students. The early reading ability of slow learners significantly improved following the application of Powtoon audiovisual-based learning media. Descriptive analysis of assessment results revealed that the average pretest score was 35 out of 100, indicating that students had minimal beginning reading proficiency prior to the intervention. Following two cycles of instruction using Powtoon animated media, the average posttest score increased substantially to 65 out of 100. This represents an improvement of 30 points, or approximately 85.71% increase from the baseline score. These quantitative findings demonstrate that the use of Powtoon has made a tangible contribution to the development of early literacy among students with special educational needs. The magnitude of improvement suggests that animated audio-visual media effectively addresses the specific learning challenges faced by slow learner students in acquiring foundational reading skills. Its engaging and interactive characteristics align well with the learning styles of students who require strong visual and auditory support. In the area of phonemic awareness, slow learner students exhibited substantial development.

Phonemic awareness—the ability to recognize and distinguish language sounds—is a fundamental component of early reading. Stanovich (2019) emphasized that phonemic awareness is one of the key predictors of reading success. Students who struggle with phoneme recognition often experience delays in reading. Through Powtoon videos featuring repeated sounds and animated letters, students can simultaneously see and hear the connection between letters and their sounds, thereby helping slow learners grasp and differentiate phonemes more effectively. Neuman and Roskos (2020) concluded in their research that audiovisual media greatly assists slow learners with special needs in improving literacy, particularly phonological awareness. Within the context of slow learners, Powtoon enables the creation of associations between letter forms and their corresponding sounds, while also reinforcing visual memory. This was evident in the improved ability of students to read and pronounce simple words such as “mama,” “bola,” and “mata” after engaging with the repetitive and attractive Powtoon videos. Improvements were also seen in students' ability to read simple words. After using Powtoon media, the average score for word reading increased from 2.00 to 3.48 (on a scale of 4).

This indicates that students were beginning to read basic words more fluently and accurately. Ehri (2021) emphasized that a bottom-up reading approach—starting from letter and phoneme recognition to word formation—

is highly effective for beginning readers. Powtoon supports this approach by aligning animated visuals with corresponding words, making comprehension easier for students with learning difficulties. Learning motivation also showed an increase. Based on Self- Determination Theory by Deci and Ryan (2018), students' intrinsic motivation improved because slow learners felt a sense of control over their learning process, experienced competence, and enjoyed the learning experience. Powtoon presents learning content in a humorous, colorful, and interactive way, which encourages active participation. In interviews, several students expressed joy in learning through videos that featured animated characters and pleasant sounds. Teachers also reported that students were more motivated compared to using traditional teaching methods. Mayer (2021) in his multimedia learning theory stated that learning is more effective when information is delivered simultaneously through text, images, and sound. This model greatly aids slow learner students who have limitations in memory and concentration. By presenting material both visually and auditorily through Powtoon, students receive information through dual sensory channels, which enhances knowledge acquisition and memory retention.

This multimodal approach also accelerates the internalization of early reading skills. Furthermore, the Mastery Learning approach, as redeveloped by Guskey (2020) from Bloom's original idea, posits that all students can achieve mastery if given appropriate time and methods. Slow learners need repetition and extended learning time. With Powtoon, learning materials can be replayed in an enjoyable manner without boring the students. Thus, they do not feel left behind, and the learning process becomes more inclusive and tailored to their needs. Observations revealed that previously passive and unfocused students began showing sustained interest in lessons. Some students who initially struggled to distinguish letters such as "b" and "d" were now able to read them correctly. This suggests that improvement was not limited to test scores but also evident in student learning behavior. Interactive visual media such as Powtoon strengthens phonemic concept understanding, which has long been challenging to reach with conventional methods. Overall, the improvement in early reading ability among slow learner students through Powtoon media is evident across various aspects: phonemic awareness, basic word reading, classroom participation, and learning motivation.

Quantitative evidence from test score improvements and qualitative data from observations and interviews indicate that this media holds great potential in addressing learning challenges among students with learning difficulties. Powtoon is a practical and effective solution for creating inclusive and meaningful learning experiences. Considering these findings, it can be concluded that animated learning media such as Powtoon significantly contributes to enhancing early reading skills among slow learners at SD Advent Sangatta. The 85.71% increase serves as strong evidence that audiovisual-based learning innovations are not only relevant but also transformative. These results offer a foundation for educators and policymakers to consider integrating visual media into primary school curricula, particularly to improve literacy among students with special learning needs. The use of audiovisual-based learning media, especially Powtoon animated videos, plays a significant role in enhancing early reading skills in slow learner students. This media simultaneously delivers information visually and auditorily, which helps students with cognitive limitations to better understand content. According to Mayer's (2021) multimedia learning theory, slow learners benefit more from reading and imagery than from words alone. Powtoon, as an animated medium, activates the brain's dual channels (visual and auditory), thereby accelerating comprehension of basic reading concepts such as letters and phonemes. Slow learners tend to struggle with complex information processing and require concrete, repetitive teaching approaches.

According to Sukardi's (2024) study, audiovisual animation media has been proven to assist students with special needs in understanding academic material through engaging visualizations and narratives. Consequently, students not only receive information passively but also actively participate in learning. Powtoon videos offer an enjoyable and non-monotonous learning experience for slow learners, who often lose interest in conventional teaching methods. From a phonemic perspective, slow learners frequently face challenges in recognizing and distinguishing letter sounds. Powtoon includes letter pronunciation sounds and visually engaging letter displays, which help strengthen phonemic awareness. Ehri (2019) emphasized that phonemic ability is a key component of early reading. Through Powtoon animations, students can simultaneously see and hear letter pronunciations, effectively building associations between symbols (letters) and sounds (phonemes). In addition to phonemic awareness, mastering simple words is another indicator of early reading ability Powtoon can present animations of simple words in visual contexts, such as images of objects or activities related to the words. According to Neuman & Roskos (2020), visual media connected to contextual images enhances memory retention of new words. In this study, students who initially could only read one- syllable words began reading two- and three-syllable words after participating in two learning cycles using animated videos.

In terms of learning motivation, slow learners often feel inferior or lack confidence when they cannot keep up with their peers. Animated media like Powtoon can foster a positive learning environment and reduce anxiety. According to Deci & Ryan's (2018) self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation can be fostered by providing enjoyable and competency-appropriate learning experiences. When students feel capable and interested in learning,

they become more enthusiastic—even if they previously felt left behind.

Students' active engagement in the learning process also increased significantly when Powtoon was used. Research observations noted that previously passive and silent students began actively answering questions, repeating words from the animation, and even requesting to rewatch videos. This aligns with Vygotsky's modern scaffolding theory, which posits that guided support through visual media can help students reach their zone of proximal development. Powtoon acts as an extension of the teacher's scaffolding, enabling students to learn more independently with audiovisual support.

From the teacher's perspective, Powtoon simplifies the delivery of basic learning materials. Teachers no longer need to draw on the board or read out loud repeatedly, as the animations convey the learning messages engagingly. This increases time efficiency and allows teachers to focus more on individual student support. According to Bandura (2020), observational learning—learning through watching models—is very effective for slow learners who learn by watching and mimicking what is shown.

The findings of this study also reveal a significant difference in pretest and posttest results. The average score of slow learners increased from 35 to 65, indicating an 85.71% improvement. This highlights the effectiveness of Powtoon-based learning interventions in enhancing reading skills. Mayer's (2021) Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning supports these findings, stating that multimedia instructional content improves retention and comprehension by engaging learners through dual information channels—visual and auditory—which reduces cognitive load and supports long-term memory storage. His research indicates that consistent and interactive visual content can improve academic performance by up to 60% among slow learner groups, especially in symbol-based subjects such as reading.

The positive impact of Powtoon also extended to students' socio-emotional development. Slow learner students who were previously withdrawn or shy began showing confidence in reading in front of the class. A supportive and non-pressuring learning environment, combined with fun media, fosters an inclusive learning atmosphere. According to Santrock (2019), a safe and positive social environment greatly influences student success in the learning process, particularly for children with special learning needs.

In conclusion, the researcher asserts that the use of audiovisual-based learning media such as Powtoon has a significant and comprehensive impact on improving the early reading abilities of slow learner students. In terms of phonemic skills, word mastery, motivation, engagement, and academic score improvement, all aspects showed positive trends after applying this media. Therefore, innovative, technology-friendly teaching approaches like Powtoon should be considered a primary strategy in early literacy instruction, especially in inclusive schools or classrooms with diverse student abilities such as SD Advent Sangatta.

The use of audiovisual learning media, especially Powtoon animated videos, had a significant impact on the early reading development of slow learner students. This media provides a simultaneous visual and auditory approach that is highly effective for students with cognitive challenges. By displaying letters, words, and sounds in an integrated and appealing way, Powtoon helps students enjoyably understand basic phonemic concepts.

Slow learners require longer time and concrete approaches in learning. In early reading, they often struggle to differentiate letter sounds and syllables. Using interactive animations, Powtoon makes learning more accessible and comprehensible. Neuman and Roskos (2020) demonstrated that animated videos help children with learning difficulties recognize the connection between symbols (letters) and sounds—a foundational literacy skill. Powtoon reinforces phonemic concepts through repeated sounds and movements. For example, when a letter is animated and clearly pronounced, students are repeatedly exposed to its sound and shape. This gradual exposure helps slow learners absorb information better. Sadiman et al. (2020) also found that animation-based learning supports gradual material delivery and increases student concentration by presenting concrete and engaging information.

Beyond phonemic comprehension, Powtoon also encourages students to actively participate. They don't just watch; they repeat sounds, imitate words, and try to read aloud from the videos. This aligns with the constructivist "learning by doing" approach from Vygotsky's theory, which highlights active involvement and visual support in helping students build understanding. In their Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), Powtoon acts as scaffolding to help them reach higher learning levels through guided visual-audio support.

The motivational and engagement benefits observed in this study are further reinforced by the theoretical frameworks previously discussed. As Deci & Ryan (2018) emphasize, enjoyable and appropriately challenging media enhances intrinsic motivation, while Sukardi (2024) confirms that animated media like Powtoon is particularly effective in boosting motivation among students with special needs due to its interactive and easy- to-understand nature. Observations and interviews revealed that students were more focused and engaged during lessons using Powtoon compared to conventional methods. Some even showed interest in rewatching the videos independently, indicating internal motivation.

One additional advantage of Powtoon is its flexibility. Teachers can adapt content to suit student needs. For

example, if a student hasn't mastered a particular letter, the video can be replayed. This aligns with Guskey's (2020) Mastery Learning approach, which states that all students can achieve mastery given sufficient time and the right method. Powtoon supports personalized learning suited to the pace of slow learners. For teachers, Powtoon simplifies instruction. They don't need to manually repeat explanations as videos present the material systematically. This saves energy and allows teachers to give more individualized attention. In the long run, using Powtoon improves classroom quality by providing accessible learning for diverse student needs. In conclusion, the use of audiovisual learning media such as Powtoon has had a positive impact on improving early reading skills in slow learners. This impact is evident across phonemic awareness, letter recognition, simple word reading, motivation, and student engagement. Supported by both theory and empirical data, Powtoon proves to be an inclusive, effective, and relevant learning tool for addressing challenges in basic education, especially for students requiring differentiated instructional approaches.

CONCLUSION

The use of audio-visual learning media, particularly Powtoon animated videos, has a positive impact on the reading abilities of slow learner students. This media helps improve students' focus, motivation, and understanding in recognizing and reading simple words. There was a significant improvement in the early reading abilities of slow learner students following the use of audio-visual media. Based on posttest results, the students' average scores increased compared to their pretest scores, indicating that this method is effective in enhancing their early reading skills. The use of Powtoon media in early reading instruction for slow learner students is effective in increasing engagement and learning motivation.

A significant improvement in reading ability was observed after using Powtoon, as evidenced by the pretest and posttest results. Both teachers and students responded positively to the use of Powtoon, although there were some challenges in its technical implementation. This study successfully developed a learning product in the form of using Powtoon animated audio-visual media to improve early reading skills in slow learner students at the elementary school level. Powtoon proved effective in capturing students' attention and helping them understand basic reading concepts such as letter recognition, syllables, and simple words. The use of Powtoon animations provided engaging visuals and simplified students' comprehension, thereby motivating them to become more actively involved in learning.

The research findings show that this media significantly enhances reading fluency and comprehension in slow learner students. The use of animated audio-visual media like Powtoon has great potential for application in elementary school learning, especially for slow learner students who require more engaging and varied approaches. Powtoon not only facilitates comprehension but also increases students' motivation to participate in reading lessons. The findings of this study highlight the importance of integrating technology into the elementary education curriculum. With the presence of interactive animated media, early reading instruction can become more varied and enjoyable, tailored to the needs of students with learning difficulties. A more flexible curriculum incorporating technology-based approaches can enhance the effectiveness of teaching. This product also has direct implications for more individualized teaching methods tailored to the needs of slow learner students. Media such as Powtoon can serve as an effective alternative to help students overcome learning difficulties, particularly in early reading development.

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