

Picture Story Media to Improve Reading Ability in 2nd grade students at SD Gajah Mada

Vitalia Hanako Murni Simanjuntak¹⁾, Fernando De Napoli Marpaung²⁾, Muhammad Fadli³⁾, Supriadi⁴⁾

¹⁾ STIKes Mitra Husada Medan, ^{2,3,4)} STKIP AL Maksum

Address

email: vitaliahanako@mitrahusada.ac.id

Received: June 23 2024

Revised: July 27 2024

Accepted: July 30 2024

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of picture story media in enhancing the reading abilities of second-grade students at SD Gajah Mada. Reading is a crucial skill for elementary students, but many face challenges in developing this skill, as evidenced by the average reading score of 63 at the school. To address this issue, picture story media was introduced as an engaging and interactive learning tool aimed at improving students' reading comprehension and motivation. Classroom action research (CAR) was employed, involving a reflective cycle of planning, action, observation, and reflection. In Cycle 1, the average reading score of students increased from 50.3% to 63.7% after implementing picture story media, with 65.8% of students meeting the passing criteria. Cycle 2 showed further improvement, with the percentage of students scoring between 75-100 rising from 43% to 93.2% by the end of the cycle. These results highlight the significant impact of picture story media in boosting students' reading skills and engagement. The findings support the use of visual aids in education, demonstrating that picture story media can effectively enhance reading abilities among young learners. The study contributes to the field of language education and provides practical insights for teachers in selecting effective learning media. Future research is suggested to explore the long-term effects of picture story media and its application in various educational contexts.

Keywords: *Picture story, Media, Reading*

Copyright © 2024 THE AUTHOR(S).

This article is licensed under [CC BY-SA 4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/)

Introduction

Reading ability is one of the basic skills that is very important in the education process, especially for elementary school students. Reading not only helps students understand the subject matter, but also opens their horizons to the outside world, improves critical thinking skills, and builds a strong foundation for future learning (Dwipayana 2021). However, the reality shows that there are still many students who face difficulties in developing their reading skills, including grade 2 students at Elementary School Gajah Mada Medan. To improve students' reading skills, various learning methods and media have been applied in school (Hidayat and Habibi 2018). One of the potential media to be used is picture story media. Picture story media can attract students' interest and attention, and help them understand

the contents of the reading better through story visualization (Kurniatin and Aryani 2021). This media can also make the learning process more fun and interactive, thus encouraging students to be more actively involved in reading activities (Retnowati, Salim, and Saleh 2018).

One indicator that shows the low reading ability of students at Gajah Mada Elementary School is the average score of students which only reaches 63. This score is below the expected standard, which reflects that many students have not been able to achieve an adequate level of reading comprehension. This low average score indicates significant challenges in the process of learning to read at this school.

The first factor that may contribute to the low reading ability of students is the lack of interest in reading. Many students may feel that reading is a boring and uninteresting activity, so they tend to avoid it. This lack of interest in reading can be caused by an environment that does not support reading habits, lack of access to interesting reading materials, or lack of encouragement from parents and teachers to make reading a routine activity.

In addition, ineffective learning methods can also be a factor in the low average reading ability of students. Monotonous and non-interactive learning methods may not be able to attract students' attention or motivate them to be actively involved in reading activities. An approach that focuses too much on memorization and practice questions without providing interesting and relevant contexts can make students feel difficult and frustrated. The limited use of interesting and interactive learning media also contributes to this problem. Interesting learning media, such as illustrated stories, educational videos, and interactive games, can help increase students' interest and understanding. However, if these media are not available or not utilized properly, the opportunity to make the learning process more enjoyable and effective will be missed.

This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of using picture story media in improving the reading skills of grade 2 students at Gaja Mada Elementary School. By using this media, it is hoped that students can more easily understand the reading, increase their interest in reading, and develop their overall reading skills. This study also seeks to identify obstacles that may be faced in the application of picture story media and find solutions to overcome them.

Thus, this study not only contributes to the field of language education, but also provides practical guidance for teachers in selecting and using effective learning media. It is expected that the results of this study can be a reference in developing more innovative and effective learning strategies, in order to significantly improve students' reading skills.

Literature Review

The use of picture story media in education has proven to be highly effective in enhancing reading skills among young learners (Cahyautami and Rahmad 2023). Picture story media is a learning aid that combines images and text to convey a story or information (Yunita Apriyani 2018). This media is designed to increase student engagement and understanding by utilizing visualizations to support and clarify written text. The use of images in stories helps students connect words with visual meanings, making it easier for them to remember and understand the material being studied. Grounded in educational theories such as Allan Paivio's Dual Coding Theory and Lev Vygotsky's Social Development Theory, picture story media combines visual and textual information to improve comprehension and memory retention (Rahimah and Izzaty 2018). Research has shown that picture story media can significantly increase student engagement and motivation, making reading more enjoyable. For example, Schwan and Riempp (2004) found that visual narratives could sustain students' attention better than text-only materials (Marhamah 2022). Additionally, studies like Fang's (1996) have demonstrated that integrating pictures with text can improve reading comprehension, allowing young readers to better understand and recall stories (Rahmatsani, Purwandari, and Rahmawati 2021).

This media is also beneficial for diverse learners, including English Language Learners (ELLs) and students with learning disabilities, as visual aids help them grasp complex concepts and vocabulary more easily (Katz 2019). Furthermore, picture story media encourages critical thinking by requiring students to interpret visual cues, infer meanings, and make connections between images and text. In practice, picture story media can be used in various educational activities such as storytelling, interactive reading sessions, vocabulary building, and multimedia projects (Sixteen Amalia, Dra. Alimatun 2024). These applications foster a collaborative learning environment, promote narrative skills, and integrate

technology with literacy development (Nur Vadilah et al. 2017). However, challenges such as the need for high-quality materials and teacher training must be addressed to maximize the impact of picture story media. While it offers numerous benefits, it is crucial to balance its use with traditional text-based reading to ensure comprehensive literacy development. It means, picture story media is a valuable tool that, when effectively integrated, can significantly enhance reading skills and literacy in diverse educational settings.

Reading ability at the elementary school level is a fundamental skill that involves various important aspects of the reading process (Nurani, RZ, Nugraha, F., & Mahendra 2021). At this stage, students must be able to recognize letters and words and combine them to form understandable sentences. They also need to develop text comprehension, which includes recognizing main ideas and important details and making inferences from the reading. In addition, reading fluency, which involves speed, accuracy and expression when reading, is essential to ensure good comprehension (Paleczek et al. 2022). A wide vocabulary also plays an important role, as understanding the meaning of new words allows students to understand more complex texts. Finally, analytical skills help students assess and understand information and text structures. Good reading ability at this level is a crucial foundation for students' academic development and contributes to their ability to learn independently in a variety of subjects.

Methods

In this study, the method used is classroom action research (CAR) method. This method is designed to improve educational practices through a reflective cycle involving planning, action, observation, and reflection (Mu'alimin and Hari 2014). Basically, CAR aims to improve the quality of learning and student learning outcomes directly through actions taken in the classroom (Nanda et al. 2021).

The first step in the CAR method is planning. In the context of this study, planning involves the development and preparation of picture story media that will be used to improve the reading skills of grade 2 students at SD Gajah Mada. This media is designed to attract students' attention and make the process of learning to read more fun and interactive.

The second step is the implementation of the action. At this stage, picture story media is applied in reading learning activities in the classroom. The teacher will use this media during the learning session to teach reading skills, with a focus on the use of images to improve text comprehension and student engagement.

The third step is observation. The researcher will observe the learning process and student responses to the use of picture story media. This observation aims to collect data on the effectiveness of media in improving students' reading skills, including changes in reading interest, text comprehension, and general reading skills.

The last step is reflection. After observation, the researcher will analyze the data obtained and reflect on the results to evaluate whether the use of picture story media has succeeded in improving students' reading skills. This reflection involves discussing the findings, challenges faced, and adjustments that may be needed to improve further action.

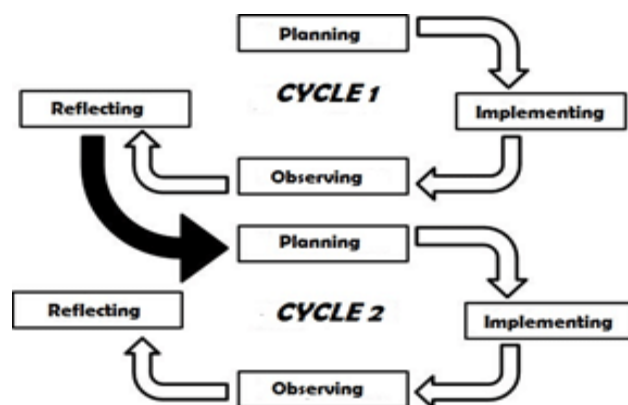


Figure 1. Cycle (Source. Research Gate)

The cycle will be repeated if the desired target value is not achieved. Through this cycle, classroom action research focuses on continuous improvement in the classroom context by involving teachers and students in the evaluation and adjustment process, so that better and more effective learning outcomes can be achieved.

Result and Discussion

The results of the study show the score obtained from cycle I and cycle II on the research object. The results of each cycle are explained below.

Cycle 1

In Cycle 1, a classroom action research was conducted using picture story media to improve the reading skills of second-grade students at SD Gajah Mada. The theme used was theme 4, subtheme 2, lesson 1. At the beginning of the implementation of picture story media, the average reading skills score of the students was only 50.3%.

This indicates that most students still faced difficulties in understanding the texts they read. Factors that might contribute to this initial low score include a lack of interest in reading, difficulties in recognizing new words, and the previous lack of engaging instructional media.

However, after the intensive application of picture story media, there was a significant improvement in the students' reading abilities. The average score increased to 63.7%. This increase indicates that picture story media effectively captured the students' attention and helped them better understand the text through visual support. Additionally, the number of students scoring above 70 increased to 12, with a pass rate of 65.8%.

This improvement not only demonstrates the effectiveness of picture story media in enhancing reading comprehension but also shows that students became more motivated and engaged in the learning process. Picture story media provide visual context that helps students associate images with text, making it easier for them to understand and remember the information they read.

The results of Cycle 1 indicate that the use of picture story media has a positive impact on the reading skills of second-grade students at SD Gajah Mada. Although there is still room for improvement, this significant increase provides a strong foundation to continue using picture story media and evaluate its effectiveness in subsequent cycles.

Table 1. Cycle 1

Des Cription	Avarage Score (%)	Number of students with score > 70	Passing Rate
Before using Picture story media	50.3%	-	-
After using picture story media	63.7%	12	65.8%

Cycle 2

In Cycle 2, there was a significant improvement in the reading skills of the 2nd-grade students when using picture story media. Initially, in Cycle 1, only 12 out of 28 students achieved a passing score, resulting in a class mastery rate of 65.8%. However, the results of Cycle 2 showed substantial progress. At the beginning of Cycle 2, 21 students scored between 75-100, which led to an increase in the class mastery rate to 83.6%.

As the sessions continued, even more impressive gains were observed. By the next meeting, all students managed to score within the 75-100 range. This complete success raised the class mastery rate to 93.2%. This dramatic improvement highlights the effectiveness of the picture story media in enhancing reading skills, demonstrating that consistent use of engaging and interactive media can lead to higher levels of student achievement and comprehension. The increased engagement and motivation,

fostered by the use of picture story media, likely contributed to this significant rise in performance, ensuring that nearly all students could meet the required standards by the end of the cycle.

Table 2. Cycle 1 and 2

Cycle	Total Number of Students	Number of Students with Score 75-100	Class Completion Percentage
Cycle 1	28	12	65.8%
Cycle 2	28	21	83.6%
Cycle 2 (Subsequent Session)	28	25	93.2%

The results from Cycle 1 and Cycle 2 of the study on using picture story media to improve reading skills among second-grade students at SD Gajah Mada indicate a noteworthy enhancement in student performance. The data reveal that the application of picture story media had a positive impact on students' reading abilities, as demonstrated by the substantial improvements in average scores and class mastery rates between the two cycles.

In Cycle 1, the average reading skills score of students began at 50.3%, reflecting challenges in reading comprehension and engagement. The increase to 63.7% after the introduction of picture story media highlights the media's effectiveness in capturing students' attention and facilitating better understanding through visual aids. The initial 65.8% pass rate further supports the notion that visual and interactive media can significantly contribute to students' learning processes.

The improvements observed in Cycle 2 are even more pronounced. The rise in the class mastery rate from 65.8% to 83.6% by the end of the first session of Cycle 2 and to 93.2% in the subsequent session signifies a remarkable advancement. This trend underscores the cumulative benefits of sustained use of picture story media. The high engagement and motivation levels, which are crucial for effective learning, likely contributed to these gains. According to Mayer (2009) (Kodrlle and Savchenko 2021), multimedia learning environments, such as those involving picture stories, facilitate deeper cognitive processing, which can lead to enhanced learning outcomes.

The studies by Anderson and Pearson (1984) (Rahimah and Izzaty 2018), which emphasize the importance of interactive and contextual learning aids in early education, reinforces the effectiveness of picture story media. The significant improvement from Cycle 1 to Cycle 2 indicates that the media not only maintained but enhanced its impact over time, suggesting that continuous and iterative use of such media can foster sustained educational progress.

The results from the study demonstrate that picture story media can effectively enhance reading skills among young learners. The positive correlation between the use of engaging media and improved reading comprehension highlights the value of incorporating such tools in educational settings. Future research could explore the long-term effects of picture story media and its application across different subjects and grade levels to further validate and expand upon these findings.

Conclusion

This study investigated how picture story media could improve reading skills among second-grade students at SD Gajah Mada. The results show that picture story media had a positive effect on students' reading abilities.

In Cycle 1, students' average reading score increased from 50.3% to 63.7% after using picture story media, and 65.8% of students passed. This initial improvement suggests that picture story media helped students engage better and understand reading materials more effectively. Cycle 2 showed even greater progress. The percentage of students get scoring between 75-100 rose from 43% to 75% and then to 89% in subsequent sessions, with the final class mastery rate reaching 93.2%. These results indicate that picture story media significantly enhanced students' reading skills and motivation.

Picture story media proved to be an effective tool for improving reading skills in young learners. The study supports existing research on the benefits of visual aids in education, showing that engaging and interactive media can lead to better learning outcomes. Future research could explore the long-term effects of picture story media and its use in other educational settings.

Acknowledgments

Thanks to the foundation and the head master of Gajah Mada Elementary School who have given permission for research at the school. Thanks are also given to the class teachers who have collaborated with the researcher so that this research can be completed properly.

References

- Cahyautami, Febbyanti Wahyu, and Ilmi Noor Rahmad. 2023. "Improving Indonesian Language Learning Outcomes on Competencies in Exploring Information through Picture Story Media for Elementary School Students." 56–62. doi: 10.37640/ice.02.481.
- Dwipayana, Made Angga. 2021. "An Analysis of Students' Reading Skill Using Electronic Book to Improve Students' English Reading Literacy in Elementary School." *Journal of Educational Study* 1(1):12–23. doi: 10.36663/joes.v1i1.145.
- Hidayat, Khoirul, and Fajri Habibi. 2018. "The Effect of Flash Card and Picture Story in Vocabulary." *Getsempena English Education Journal (GEEJ)* 5(1):18–23.
- Katz, Helen. 2019. "What Is Media?" *The Media Handbook* 1–9. doi: 10.4324/9780429434655-1.
- Kodrle, Svetlana, and Anna Savchenko. 2021. "Digital Educational Media in Foreign Language Teaching and Learning." *E3S Web of Conferences* 273. doi: 10.1051/e3sconf/202127312018.
- Kurniatin, Susan Risanti, and Rita Aryani. 2021. "Efforts to Increase Creativity in Early Children Through Picture Story Media." *Eduvest - Journal of Universal Studies* 1(8):735–43. doi: 10.59188/eduvest.v1i8.150.
- Marhamah, Marhamah. 2022. "Development of Picture Story Book Learning Media to Increase Elementary School Students' Interest in Reading English." *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama* 14(2):821–30. doi: 10.37680/qalamuna.v14i2.3680.
- Mu'alimin, and Rahmat Arofah Cahyadi Hari. 2014. "Penelitian Tindakan Kelas Teori Dan Praktek." *Ganding* 44(8):1–87.
- Nanda, Indra, Hasan Sayfullah, Rahmadanni Pohan, Devi Suci Windariyah, Fakhurrazi, Kherrmarinah, and Syibrans Mulasi. 2021. *Penelitian Tindakan Kelas Untuk Guru Inspiratif*.
- Nur Vadilah, Okta, Nurhadi Kusuma, Dwi Rohmadi M, and Amrulloh Khoirul M. 2017. "Efektivitas Metode Cerita Bergambar Dalam Meningkatkan Minat Baca Siswa Kelas 2 Di SD Negeri Sumber Bandung." *Jurnal Stit Pringsewu* 65.
- Nurani, RZ, Nugraha, F., & Mahendra, HH. 2021. "Analysis of Beginning Reading Difficulties in Elementary School Children." *Basicedu Journal* 5(3):1462–1470.
- Paleczek, Lisa, Daniela Ender, Andrea Kogler, and Susanne Seifert. 2022. "Comparing Student High and Low Reading Performance With Differentiated Digital Reading Materials." *Proceedings of the European Conference on E-Learning, ECEL 2022-Octob:338–47*. doi: 10.34190/ecel.21.1.680.
- Rahimah, Febri Yuridnir, and Rita Eka Izzaty. 2018. "Developing Picture Story Book Media for Building the Self-Awareness of Early Childhood Children." *Jurnal Obsesi : Jurnal Pendidikan Anak Usia Dini* 2(2):219. doi: 10.31004/obsesi.v2i2.102.
- Rahmatsani, Lutfiana, Septiyati Purwandari, and Puji Rahmawati. 2021. "Effect of Learning Model Savi Assisted Media Kabaca (Calendar Picture Story) of Skills Reading Understanding of Stories." *Proceeding of The URECOL* 538–43.
- Retnowati, Giyati, Rose Mini Agoes Salim, and Airin Y. Saleh. 2018. "Effectiveness of Picture Story Books Reading to Increase Kindness in Children Aged 5-6 Years." *Lingua Cultura*

12(1):89. doi: 10.21512/lc.v12i1.2095.

Sixteen Amalia, Dra. Alimatun, Enci Zarkasih. 2024. "Investigating the Effect of Picture Story Book on Grade Ten Students' Reading Comprehension Ability." *Sports Culture* 15(1):72–86. doi: 10.25130/sc.24.1.6.

Yunita Apriyani, Bambang Sahono. 2018. "PENERAPAN METODE BER CERITA BERBANTUAN MEDIA GAMBAR UNTUK MENINGKATKAN KEMAMPUAN BERBICARA DAN KEMAMPUAN MENINGGAT ANAK USIA DINI." *עלון הנוטע* 66(2).