

Development of Big Books to Improve Elementary School Students' Beginner Reading Skills

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Abstract: This research aims to develop Big Book to improve elementary school students' initial reading skills. This research is a type of Research and development (R&D) with a 4D model (Define, Design, Development, & Dissemination). Data collection techniques are carried out through structured interviews, non-participant observations, questionnaires, pre-tests, post-tests, and documentation. The Big Book design developed has been declared valid by experts with a Material Expert Assessment Percentage of 90% (Very Valid) and a Media Expert Assessment Percentage of 90% (Very Valid). The students' responses showed practicality with a percentage of 75.1% (Practical), and the results of the practitioners' assessment showed a percentage of 92.2% (Very Practical). The results of the pre-test and post-test of grade I students of SDN 094102 Sambosar showed an increase in N-Gain of 82%, which is in the high category. Thus, Big Book was declared effective in improving beginner reading skills. This study concludes that the development of Big Book effectively improves elementary school students' initial reading skills. The limitation of this study is that it is only conducted in one school (SDN 094102 Sambosar) and one class (grade I), so it is difficult to generalise these results to other schools and classes. Further research is recommended to involve more than one school to test the generalisation of results for different schools.

Kata Kunci: 4D Models, Big Book, Reading Skills



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A. Introduction

The low reading skills of first-graders at SD 094102 Sambosar can be seen when students struggle to recognise letters and read words. Based on interviews and observations, this is due to the limitations of exciting and interactive learning media. According to Anderson, early reading is an integrated reading activity that emphasises the recognition of letters and words and their relationship to sound (Hasanah & Lena, 2021). Through teaching students to read initially, it is hoped that they can read words and sentences fluently and accurately. Students' reading skills affect their learning stages. To achieve the learning goal, students must experience strategies, technology, and learning media (Lestari et al., 2023). Reading is a receptive ability in written

language, where individuals are actively involved in choosing and understanding the message or meaning of the writing. This interaction allows readers to get the information that the author wants to inform through text or written language (Rahmah & Amaliya, 2022). Reading ability aims to facilitate understanding, recognition, and retention of information so that students can read fluently and effectively.

Reading comprehension skills are one of the basic skills that are essential for students from elementary to junior high school (Dzulfour & Setiawan, 2022). Although many studies have highlighted the importance of early reading and reading comprehension skills, previous studies have focused less on using innovative and engaging media to support early reading skills. In addition, previous research has not provided enough concrete solutions to increase students' interest and enthusiasm in reading through more interactive and visual learning media. This causes limitations in overcoming the lack of interest in reading among lower-grade students.

Based on the results of pre-research observations at SD 094102 Sambosar through interviews, many students in the lower grades, especially grade I, are still late in reading. The availability of media to stimulate students' reading activities is minimal, just from teachers' and students' books. Then, there is a lack of learning media in teaching initial reading in the classroom. This causes a lack of interest or enthusiasm because the media is not engaging. The problems in grade I include: (1) students still lack mastery of the alphabet, to difficulties in reading, (2) there is no availability of learning media such as *big books* to help improve students' reading skills in schools only package books are available.

To overcome the above problems, the author developed *big book media* to overcome difficulties in recognising letters and reading words. *This big book* media will help improve reading skills in the first grade of SD 049102 Sambosar. According to USAID, a big book is a type of reading book that contains pictures, writings, and pictures on a large scale. The size of the ledger varies from A3, A4, and A5 and can be adjusted according to the size of the class being taught. The advantage of a ledger is that it has a large colour image. Teachers can also create ledgers whose content and stories align with the students' personalities, interests, and needs. This provides an opportunity for joint reading activities between teachers and students (Agustiningrum, Utomo, & Fathurrohman, 2021).

Big book media is designed to improve students' reading skills and support students' early reading skills. The plan is to make extensive book learning using pictures and writing in an attractive and well-organized manner to meet the needs of students. Big book media can help build a reading culture in schools. The education provided in schools mainly aims to provide helpful food in life. Schools must be able to transform children into human beings who can live with the knowledge that teachers give to their students during learning, namely the teacher's ability to plan life situations and think about his abilities (Azmi, Nasution, Anwar, & Nasir, 2022).

Based on study, this study aims to develop big book media to improve the initial reading skills of first-grade students at SD 094102 Sambosar. Utilising big books is hoped to solve the limitations of existing learning media and increase students' interest and enthusiasm in reading. This media is expected to be able to visually illustrate abstract material to make it easier for students to understand and help build a better reading culture in schools. This study also aims to prove that using innovative and exciting media can increase the effectiveness of early reading learning.

B. Method

This research is a type of Research and development (RnD) research referring to Thiagarajan's 4D (Define, Design, Develop, and Dissemination) model, which includes the stages of defining product needs, designing designs, developing products, disseminating them, and applying them in a learning environment.

The research population is all students at SDN 094102 Sambosar for the 2023/2024 school year, consisting of 105 students. The research sample used in this study is all 1st-grade students of SDN No. 094102 Sambosar, totalling 22 students. This sampling aims to obtain information related to the population that is the target of the research so that it can obtain accurate data. The research instruments used were observation, interviews, questionnaires, pre-tests, and post-tests. Data collection techniques include observation of student interactions with Big Books, interviews with teachers and students, questionnaires for opinion evaluation, and pre-tests and post-tests to measure changes in students' reading skills. The research subjects consisted of 22 1st-grade students of SDN 094102 Sambosar, chosen to represent a larger student population.

Table 1. Media Expert Assessment Criteria

Scale (%)	Criterion
76% - 100%	Valid
51% - 75%	Quite Valid
26% - 50%	Less Valid
0% - 25%	Invalid

Table 2. Media Practicality Criteria

Scale (%)	Criterion
81% - 100%	Excellent
61% - 80%	Good
41% - 60%	Pretty Good
21% - 40%	Not Good
0% - 40%	Very Not Good

Data analysis was carried out using a qualitative approach to understand context and perceptions and statistical analysis to test the significance of changes in reading skills before and after using the Big Book Questionnaire. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics converted into percentage form to see the distribution of assessments and average scores with the interpretation of media eligibility criteria (see

Table 1) and media practicality criteria (see Table 2) (Ningtiyas et al., 2024). The data analysis technique using N-Gain was used to categorise the improvement in learning outcomes based on the N-Gain score obtained. Low category ($0\% < g \leq 30\%$), Medium category ($30\% < g \leq 70\%$), High category ($70\% < g \leq 100\%$) (Hake, 1998).

C. Results and Discussion

Result

Big Book Development Procedure to Improve Elementary School Students' Beginner Reading Skills uses a 4-D development model consisting of four stages:

Define Stage

This definition is the initial stage before the implementation of the development stage. This stage aims to determine and define the conditions needed to compile a *big book*. There are three activities in the analysis or definition: (a) initial analysis is carried out by collecting information through interviews with grade I teachers at SDN 094102 Sambosar. The results of interviews with grade I teachers showed a lack of media in the learning stage, and many students still experienced reading delays. Therefore, it is hoped that learning media such as big books will increase grade I students' initial reading skills. (b) Student Analysis: This analysis takes a post-test and a pre-test regarding the initial reading. The results of the test evaluation show that there are still many students who are not doing well. (c) Concept analysis: The development concept is based on the essential competencies in 3.4 regarding vocabulary about the limbs and the five senses.

Design Stage

The second stage in the 4D method is designed; four steps must be done, namely: (a) preparatory test: the test is designed based on the results of determining specific learning objectives (basic skills and programs) related to grade I of SDN 094102 Sambosar, the researcher chooses big book media to improve initial reading skills in grade I. (b) implementation plan, post-test, pre-test, and learning media in textbook format. Learning materials are designed by considering the characteristics of students in the classroom environment and integrating learning materials into first-grade evaluation materials. (c) Evaluation materials should be prepared in the form of paper to find out the learning status of students. Learning outcomes. There are two types of questions in the survey: pre-test and pre-test.

Develop Stage

This stage aims to produce big book learning media to increase students' initial reading skills, which their validity will influence. This validity stage is divided into two validation aspects: media and material. This validation activity is intended to measure the practicality and validity of good media to be used in the learning process. The following are the validation results of the material (see Table 1) and media experts (see Table 2).

Table 1. Percentage of Material Expert Assessment

No	Indicator	Score	Maximum Score	Percentage
1	Material Aspects	36	40	90%
Category		Highly Valid		

Based on the assessment of material experts, it was found that the material assessment was calculated, and the percentage of the validation value was obtained at 90%, where the score was 36 for the ten aspects of the assessment of the material that had been validated. The criteria are very valid, and it can be concluded that the material contained in the big book media can improve students' initial reading skills.

Table 2. Percentage of Media Expert Assessment

No	Indicator	Score	Maximum Score	Percentage
1	Media Aspects	36	40	90%
Category		Highly Valid		

Based on the results of the assessment of material experts, it was found that the assessment of the material was calculated, and the percentage of the validation value was obtained at 90%, where the score was 36 for the ten aspects of the assessment of the material that had been validated. The criteria are very valid, and it can be concluded that the material contained in the big book media can improve students' initial reading skills. The trial was conducted on 22 students in grade I of SDN 094102 Sambosar. The trial was conducted to see the practical aspects of using learning media. After the trial was carried out, students were given a response questionnaire after they had learned to use *big book media*. Below is a recapitulation of the student response in Table 3.

The results of the students who participated in the experiment showed that big books generally reached a percentage of 75.1% in the practical category. In addition to student results, practical activities are also reflected in the results of practitioner evaluations. First-grade teachers are asked to review large media workbooks. Below is an overview of the practice assessments conducted by teachers. The assessment of practicality was obtained based on the responses of students and teachers, showing that big books can be used in the learning process. The students' responses showed that the learning media developed could be well received. So, it can be concluded that *big book media* can improve the reading skills of grade I students of SDN 094102 Sambosar.

The peer review results showed that 92.2% of the research media was included in the practical category. Empirical evaluations of student and teacher results show that this hefty book can be used in learning. Overall, the students' responses were good. Therefore, it can be concluded that big books can improve the reading skills of first-grade students of SDN 094102 Sambosar.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Student Responses

Respondent	The Number of Each Aspect	Maximal Score	Percentage	Criterion
Ap	53	70	75%	Practical
Aj	57	70	81%	
Mr	47	70	67%	
Fh	56	70	80%	
Ms	56	70	80%	
Kr	44	70	62%	
Yd	46	70	65%	
Al	47	70	67%	
Ma	53	70	75%	
Bl	56	70	80%	
Gi	56	70	80%	
Aq	56	70	80%	
An	59	70	84%	
Ag	50	70	71%	
Ad	45	70	64%	
Ar	44	70	62%	
Sp	56	70	80%	
Zf	47	70	67%	
Wm	59	70	84%	
Nz	56	70	80%	
Af	56	70	80%	
Fj	58	70	82%	
Mean			75,1 %	Practical

Table 4. Practitioner Assessment Results

Number	Indicator	Score	Maximum Score	Percentage
1	Eligibility Aspects of Content	14	15	93%
2	Language Aspects	5	5	100%
3	Material Aspects	12	15	80%
4	Media Aspects	24	25	96%
Category			92,2% (Very Practical)	

Dissemination

At the dissemination stage, the implementation of learning media was developed in one class for four meetings. Meeting one was given a pre-test, and in the fifth meeting, a post-test was given to see the effectiveness of the application of learning

media. The results will be obtained from the N-Gain pre-test and post-test class I of SDN 094102 Sambosar to see the difference between before and after using big book media.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CMj3EL02akcLBz6CftPIPnsRR899zkn7/view?usp=sharing>

Table 5. Pretest, Posttest and N-Gain Score Results

No.	Respondent	Score		N-Gain Score	N-gain Score(100%)
		Pretest	Posttest		
1	Sp	60	100	1	100%
2	Kr	80	100	1	100%
3	Ap	40	60	0,33	33%
4	Nz	80	100	1	100%
5	Wm	60	100	1	100%
6	Af	60	100	1	100%
7	Mr	80	100	1	100%
8	Ad	60	80	0,5	50%
9	Gi	20	80	0,75	75%
10	Ar	20	100	1	100%
11	Aq	20	80	0,75	75%
12	Zf	60	100	1	100%
13	Fh	40	60	0,33	33%
14	Yn	60	80	0,5	50%
15	Ms	20	80	0,07	70%
16	Bl	40	80	0,66	66%
17	An	60	80	0,5	50%
18	Mr	60	100	1	100%
19	Fj	60	80	0,5	50%
20	Ai	20	80	0,75	75%
21	Ag	60	80	0,5	50%
22	Aj	40	100	1	100%
Mean		47,2	90,9		82%

The pre-test and post-test results have been good, with a percentage rate of 82%. So, it can be said that *big books* can improve students' reading skills. This can happen due to the application of big book media to facilitate students in the learning stage. Throughout the learning stages, students can individually and actively construct materials and several activities for learning using *big book media*.

Discussion

This study shows that the use of big book media can significantly improve the initial reading skills of grade I students at SDN 094102 Sambosar. Based on the results

of the pre-test and post-test, there was an increase in the average score from 47.2 in the pre-test to 90.9 in the post-test, with an increase of 82%. These findings indicate that big book media effectively improves students' reading skills. These findings align with constructivist learning theory, which states that effective learning allows students to construct their knowledge actively (Amaliyah & Marlina, 2023). This theory is relevant to elementary school students in a concrete operational period (Rosidah & Pebrianti, 2022). In the concrete operational period, primary school students are at the stage of logical thinking but still rely heavily on natural objects and direct experience to understand abstract concepts (Rizqiyati et al., 2023). They learn more quickly when manipulating physical objects and seeing immediate results from their actions (Johan, Auliya, & Ghasya, 2018; Kiromi & Fauziah, 2016). Big Books as a learning medium supports this need by providing significant, engaging, and relevant texts and images that are relevant to students' daily experiences. Through interaction with Big Books, students can see, touch, and read text and images that help them better understand stories or concepts. Big books as a learning medium provide opportunities for students to actively participate in learning, developing reading skills through interaction with texts that are interesting and relevant to their experience. This supports previous research that shows that the use of visual and interactive media in reading learning can improve student motivation and learning outcomes (Ilham & Desinatalia, 2022; Rahmah & Amaliya, 2022)

This research is in line with the research Ramadhani (2020), which states that engaging and relevant learning materials can increase student engagement and help them achieve better learning outcomes. Big books as a learning medium meet this criterion, with content tailored to essential competencies and student needs and designs that attract students' attention.

Furthermore, these findings are also supported by research conducted Talwiasih (2019), which shows that using big books in early reading can improve students' literacy skills. Big books provide sizable text and attractive illustrations, making it easier for students to understand and follow the storyline. Using big books also allows teachers to teach reading skills directly through a good reading model and provide constructive feedback to students.

In this study conducted at SDN 094102 Sambosar, implementing the big book effectively overcame reading delays in grade I students. This improvement in students' reading skills can be attributed to the design of media that considers students' characteristics and needs and the implementation of learning that facilitates active interaction between students and learning materials.

The big book also supports Vygotsky's theory of the proximal developmental zone, where effective learning occurs when students are given tasks that are slightly above their current abilities but can be achieved with the help and guidance of teachers (Rosidah & Pebrianti, 2022) In this study, the big book serves as a tool for teachers to guide students properly, helping them develop reading skills gradually and effectively.

Overall, this study's findings show that big-book media is a valid and practical tool for improving the initial reading skills of grade I students. Big books can effectively improve elementary school literacy skills by considering students' needs and characteristics, applying the principles of constructivist learning, and using the theory of proximal developmental zones. This research contributes to developing innovative and effective learning media and emphasises the importance of engaging and relevant media in improving student learning outcomes.

D. Conclusion

This research aims to develop Big Book to improve elementary school students' initial reading skills. Big-book media is developed through definition, design, development, and dissemination. The Big Book design developed has been declared valid by experts with a Material Expert Assessment Percentage of 90% (Very Valid) and a Media Expert Assessment Percentage of 90% (Very Valid). The students' responses showed practicality with a percentage of 75.1% (Practical), and the results of the practitioners' assessment showed a percentage of 92.2% (Very Practical). The results of the pre-test and post-test of grade I students of SDN 094102 Sambosar showed an increase in N-Gain of 82%, which is in the high category. Thus, Big Book was declared effective in improving beginner reading skills. This study concludes that the development of Big Book effectively improves elementary school students' initial reading skills. The limitation of this study is that it is only conducted in one school (SDN 094102 Sambosar) and one class (grade I), so it is difficult to generalise these results to other schools and classes. This study was only conducted in one school (SDN 094102 Sambosar) and one class (grade I), so it is difficult to generalise these results to other schools and classes. Conduct research involving more than one school to test the generalisation of results across different schools.

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