Al-Tatawur : International journal of Social Science (TIJOSC)

E-ISSN: 3005-5342

P-ISSN: 3005-5334

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

Epta Aprita Purba[1*], Bayu Pamungkas[2]

[1-2] Postgraduate Study Program in Special Education, Faculty of Education , Universitas Negri Yogyakarta

*Corresponding Author: eptaaprita.2024@student.uny.ac.id

Abstract. This study aims to improve the early reading skills of slow learner students through the utilization of Powtoon animated audio-visual media in Indonesian language instruction at SD Advent Sangatta. The specific objective of the research is to evaluate the effectiveness of animation media in capturing attention, enhancing comprehension, and stimulating learning motivation among students with special needs, particularly those who face difficulties in early reading. The method used is Classroom Action Research (CAR), conducted in two cycles. Each cycle consists of planning, action implementation, observation, and reflection. The research subjects were four slow learner students in the first grade of SD Advent Sangatta. Data were collected through pretests, posttests, observations, interviews, and documentation, and were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and paired sample t-tests, as well as qualitatively through thematic analysis. The results show that the use of Powtoon media had a significant impact on improving the early reading abilities of slow learner students. The average pretest score of 35 increased to 65 in the posttest, showing an 85.71% improvement. Additionally, students demonstrated greater focus, motivation, and engagement during the learning process. Interviews and observations confirmed that the media made learning more enjoyable, easier to understand, and aligned with the learning characteristics of slow learners. Therefore, the use of animated media like Powtoon is recommended as an effective and inclusive instructional strategy for students with special educational needs.

Keywords: Audio-Visual; Early Reading; Indonesian Language Learning; Powtoon Media; Slow Learner.

1. Introduction

Early reading is a crucial skill for elementary school students as part of their basic education. Reading skills are fundamental to mastering other subjects. When students master basic reading skills, they can more easily understand other subjects, such as Indonesian, mathematics, and science, which rely on reading skills to comprehend text and instructions. Reading serves as a key to overall academic success (Snow, 2010).

ability involves two main stages, namely recognizing letters and connecting letters with sounds (phonemes) (Emilia, 2016). Gibson and Levin 2021 Effective beginning reading involves a systematic and repetitive phonics (recognition of letter sounds) based approach. Reading can broaden students' understanding of various concepts, help them analyze and evaluate information, and connect ideas from various sources. In a learning context, reading serves as a means to develop critical thinking skills, which are essential in education (Guthrie & Wigfield 2017). Students who master early reading will have sufficient literacy skills to face other academic challenges (Chall, 2000).

In reality, *slow learners* often struggle to meet the expected reading standards in elementary school because they require more time and in-depth instruction (Lerner & Johns, 2015). *Slow learners* typically have trouble processing more complex information. *Slow learners* also often struggle to understand the relationship between letters, sounds, and word meanings, which makes learning to read slower and more difficult (Baker & Zigmond, 2020). Students with learning disabilities, including slow learners, experience significant difficulties

Received: September 25, 2025
Revised: November 20, 2025
Accepted: January 28, 2026
Published: March 31, 2026
Curr. Ver.: March 31, 2026

learning to read. They find that these disabilities are often related to difficulties connecting letters and sounds or difficulty understanding more complex words (Vaughn & Linan-Thompson, 2019). *Slow learners* require more time and adequate attention to achieve the expected reading standards for their age (Santrock, 2018).

Slow learners have a slightly lower mastery of the material needed to advance to the next level. *Slow learners* are not incapable, although they may *have* below-average intelligence. They simply require additional effort to master the lessons. *Slow learners, also known as slow* learners, take longer to grasp material than their peers. Research shows that *slow learners* have IQs ranging between 50 and 69, making their development difficult. However, students with IQs between 70 and 89 can still be educated according to their abilities. Children who learn more slowly, or slow learners, often have difficulty understanding lessons, especially in reading activities (Bagaskorowati, 2021).

Slow learners often struggle to distinguish language sounds, identify syllables, and manipulate sounds within words. This can hinder their ability to connect letters to sounds, which is the foundation of reading. Phonemic awareness is a key factor influencing reading ability. Children with difficulties with phonemic awareness are more likely to have difficulty reading.

Providing appropriate instruction and support can help all children, including slow learners, develop strong early reading skills and become successful readers. Repeated presentations using audio-visual methods can help *slow learners* grasp concepts more deeply. Students learn best through hands-on experience or interactive media. The use of audio-visual media provides a more immersive learning experience. Students learn best when material is presented through a combination of words (text/narration) and images (visuals/animation).

As a step to improve early reading skills for students experiencing difficulties, one learning method that can be used is to utilize learning media that are appropriate to their characteristics. Audio-visual animation media, such as Powtoon, can be an effective choice in supporting the learning process. Powtoon is a tool that allows the creation of attractive visual animations, thereby clarifying material and encouraging students to be more active in learning. In this context, the use of Powtoon as an aid in teaching Indonesian at the elementary school level, especially in improving early reading skills, is in line with efforts to make education more quality and attractive for students with learning difficulties. Therefore, this study aims to explore how the use of Powtoon animated audio-visual media can improve early reading skills in students experiencing difficulties in elementary school, as well as how its application in Indonesian language learning can improve the quality of education to be more inclusive and comprehensive.

The use of animation-based audiovisual media such as Powtoon offers a possible solution to this problem. This media can create a more engaging and enjoyable learning environment, which will increase interest and motivation for students experiencing learning difficulties. Interactive features, such as animation, educational games, and quizzes, can support children in understanding reading material in a more enjoyable and easy way (Sukardi, 2024). This approach requires teachers' expertise and creativity in technology, particularly in utilizing software commonly used in education. The use of technology in education not only expands access to information but also increases the effectiveness of learning. One innovation in education is the use of animated audiovisual media, which has been proven to provide numerous benefits in the teaching and learning process (Shalikhah, 2016). Animated videos offer a variety of tools and applications that allow students to interact directly with the subject matter through engaging visual, audio, and animated elements.

At Sangatta Utara Adventist Elementary School, East Kutai, 4 out of 24 students have not yet been able to read the beginning. Based on the homeroom teacher's opinion and the results of the odd semester exam in December 2024, *slow learner students* have not received optimal scores and must be guided to be able to answer questions. The homeroom teacher has attempted to improve students' reading skills by providing additional time after school for 30 minutes and providing colored reading books with simple sentences. The homeroom teacher also strives to maintain intense communication with parents / guardians of students. The efforts made have not yet improved slow learner students. *Slow learner students* still need more time to understand the lesson, even for basic material, such as reading the beginning or recognizing numbers. *Slow learner students* tend not to focus on the material being taught and often run out of class. *Slow learner students* tend to lose enthusiasm for learning because they often feel left behind compared to their peers and need constant encouragement from

teachers and parents to stay motivated. *Slow learner students* often feel inferior and withdraw from their friends, especially when they cannot participate in class activities well. This leads to a lack of confidence in social interactions.

Based on this, researchers want to improve students' reading skills by utilizing animated audio-visual media that is easy for students and teachers to access in facilitating the learning process of *slow learner students* , especially in Sangatta Adventist Elementary School (SD) in the Indonesian language teaching and learning process. This study aims to improve the initial reading skills of *slow learner students through the use of* Powtoon animated audio-visual media . The results of this study are expected to provide a positive contribution to *slow learner* students not only in Sangatta Adventist Elementary School, but can be used for *slow learner students* who face the same challenges.

2. Literature Review

Slow Learner

Slow learners, or students with slow learning abilities, are a group of children with below-average intelligence who can still participate in learning activities with additional assistance and support (Gargiulo & Bouck, 2018). *Slow learners* take longer to grasp basic concepts and skills, including reading. They tend to struggle with conventional learning processes and require learning techniques tailored to their learning styles.

Slow learners are children whose learning rate is slower than that of their peers, even though they are not classified as having an intellectual disability. They often struggle to grasp more complex academic concepts, require more time and repetition in learning, and tend to have slower problem-solving skills. Here are some basic theories related to *slow learners*:

According to Jean Piaget (1952), children's cognitive development progresses through several stages (sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational), with each stage having specific characteristics in the child's way of thinking. *Slow learners* usually show delays in reaching certain developmental stages, especially the concrete operational stage, which is crucial for the ability to understand academic concepts. In this stage, children begin to understand logical concepts but require concrete materials, while *slow learners* require more time and simpler materials to understand them.

Atkinson & Shiffrin's (1968) information processing theory views learning as a computer-like process, where information is entered, processed, stored, and reused. *Slow learners* often have limitations in processing speed, the ability to retain information in short-term memory, and the ability to store information efficiently in long-term memory. This means that *slow learners* often require more intensive repetition and visualization of concepts to help them understand and remember the information they learn.

Vygotsky (1978) emphasized the importance of social interaction in the learning process, particularly in relation to the concept known as the zone of proximal development (ZPD). The ZPD describes the gap between the competencies a child can achieve independently and those that can be achieved with the assistance or guidance of more knowledgeable individuals, such as educators or peers. Students categorized as slow learners often benefit greatly from scaffolding or additional support within the ZPD, where adults or peers can provide appropriate assistance to help the child overcome their developmental challenges.

Gardner (1983) stated that intelligence is not limited to logical-mathematical or linguistic abilities, but also encompasses several other types of intelligence, such as kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and other areas. *Slow learners* may possess intelligence or strengths in non-academic areas, such as interpersonal or kinesthetic intelligence. This approach encourages educators to create varied learning models tailored to individual student strengths to help enhance effective learning.

Maslow's (1953) hierarchy of needs theory also states that individuals need to fulfill their basic needs, such as safety, esteem, and love, before they can reach their academic potential. *Slow learners* often have low self-esteem due to comparisons with peers who have higher academic achievement. By meeting their emotional and psychological needs through a supportive and rewarding learning environment, *slow learners* tend to be more motivated to learn and better able to face academic challenges.

Edward Deci & Richard Ryan's (1985) theory of learning motivation, based on Deci and Ryan's self-determination, emphasizes the importance of autonomy, competence, and social relationships in the learning process. *Slow learners* often lose motivation when they feel

they have failed or are inadequate compared to their peers. Therefore, motivation can be enhanced through approaches that provide children with successful experiences on tasks appropriate to their ability level and by appreciating their efforts, not just their results.

Mastery learning is a learning approach developed by Benjamin Bloom (1968), which emphasizes that every student can achieve mastery of material provided they are given sufficient time and the right methods. *Slow learners* often require additional time to grasp certain concepts or skills. In the mastery learning approach, students do not move on to the next material until they have mastered the basic concept being studied. This approach is suitable for *slow learners* because it allows them to learn at their own pace without pressure.

Based on these theories, several effective learning strategies that can be applied to *slow learner students* are:

a. Media such as videos, animations, or images can support *slow learner students* in understanding concepts better.
b. Provide additional time and repetition of the material so that children can understand it well before moving on to the next material.
c. Building a safe, respectful learning environment and motivating children to keep trying even when they encounter difficulties.
d. Adapting learning strategies and materials based on each child's unique strengths and needs, such as using kinesthetic activities for children with higher kinesthetic intelligence.

Research on *slow learners* focuses on various aspects, such as the causes, characteristics, and effective learning strategies and interventions. This study aims to understand the special needs of *slow learners* and develop teaching methods that can help them learn more optimally. Research focuses on how these children process information, memory, problem-solving, and emotional aspects such as motivation and self-confidence. Studies on the most effective learning methods and strategies, such as individualized learning, remedial learning, and mastery learning. Research explores the use of tools such as learning applications, videos, or interactive software to improve the motivation and understanding of slow learners. Research on the role of family support, the school environment, and social relationships in the development of slow learners.

Research on *slow learners* has revealed several important findings: they tend to have slower information processing speeds and limited short-term memory capacity. This results in them needing more repetition in learning than other children of the same age. Research shows that structured learning methods tailored to individual children's needs, such as mastery learning and phonology-based approaches to reading, can enhance their understanding of the material. Methods that provide additional time and repetition have proven effective for slow learners. The use of digital aids, such as audio and image-based learning applications, has shown positive results in helping *slow learners* better grasp difficult concepts. These interactive media can increase learning interest and motivation, which are often challenges for slow learners. Research also finds that *slow learners* tend to have low self-confidence and are less motivated due to comparisons with peers. Emotional support from teachers and family, as well as a non-competitive learning environment, can help them feel more comfortable and enthusiastic about learning. Research on *slow learners* is particularly urgent because children with slower learning rates often face challenges in formal education processes designed for students with average or above-average development.

Beginning Reading Skills

Early reading skills are essential foundational skills for elementary school students. These skills not only serve to understand information but also serve as a foundation for developing other academic skills. According to McKenna and Stahl (2015), early reading involves recognizing letters and sounds, understanding syllables, and connecting words to form meaning. Students who do not master early reading skills tend to struggle in other subjects, especially language, as reading is key to understanding instruction.

Early reading skills are the initial stage in children's literacy development, particularly in elementary school. Students begin to recognize, understand, and produce basic letter sounds, words, and sentences. This stage encompasses several basic skills such as letter recognition, phoneme recognition, and simple word comprehension, as well as developing the ability to combine sounds into meaningful words and sentences.

The theoretical basis for early reading skills is often associated with emergent literacy theory, which assumes that literacy skills begin early and develop along with children's exposure to language, both verbally and visually. According to Jean Piaget, children's cognitive

development occurs in specific stages. At elementary school age, children are in the preoperational or early concrete operational stage, where they begin to understand symbols such as letters and words. This supports the recognition of letters as representations of sound and meaning.

This theory emphasizes the importance of social interaction in learning, including in reading ability. Vygotsky introduced The concept of *proximal* development (ZPD) states that a child can achieve a high level of literacy comprehension through assistance from adults or more competent peers. Digital learning media can act as a scaffolding tool by providing gradual guidance and assistance. In this model, reading comprehension is viewed as the result of two processes: top-down (based on context and existing knowledge) and bottom-up (starting from letter recognition to understanding words and sentences). Early reading tends to focus on a bottom-up approach, where students begin with recognizing basic letters and sounds, which are then combined into words and sentences. This theory emphasizes the importance of phonological awareness (the ability to recognize and manipulate sounds in words) in early reading. Understanding letter sounds and phonemes is the foundation for children to be able to combine these sounds into words.

Research by Ehri (2004) examined the development of children's reading skills and found that phonological understanding significantly influences children's speed and accuracy in reading. Furthermore, research by Panel (2000) in the United States identified five important components in early reading learning: phoneme understanding, word comprehension, sentence comprehension, vocabulary development, and text comprehension. Research findings indicate that various determinants influence children's early reading skills, including: Children who demonstrate enhanced phonological awareness generally demonstrate faster and more efficient word recognition abilities and the ability to synthesize sounds into words. Educational media that incorporate technological elements, such as reading apps featuring visual aids, auditory components, and animations, have the potential to increase student engagement and motivation towards reading. The involvement of parents and educators is crucial in facilitating children's reading development. Children who receive reading stimulation both at home and in educational settings usually experience accelerated development. Pedagogical strategies that integrate phonological instruction, word recognition, along with reading practice using texts tailored to the learner's proficiency level have been empirically validated as effective in improving early reading skills.

Animated Audio Visual Media

Animated audiovisual media is a form of media that combines several elements such as sound, visuals, and animation to convey learning materials interactively and engagingly. According to Mayer (2021), animated media can improve students' attention and understanding because information can be conveyed in an easy- to-understand and engaging form. Animation, such as that presented through Powtoon software, provides visual representations that help students, especially those with specific needs such as slow learners, understand and remember basic concepts (Sadiman et al., 2020). Animated videos, including Powtoon-based media, are effective in the learning process because they can combine audio, visual, and animation elements to help students understand abstract concepts concretely. Shalikhah (2016). Interactive animated media such as Powtoon creates a more engaging and enjoyable learning experience, especially for students with learning disabilities. Sukardi (2024).

Powtoon is a web-based platform that allows users to create videos and animations quickly and easily. With its user-friendly interface, Powtoon enables the creation of engaging visual content without requiring in-depth graphic design skills. Powtoon has been used as an effective learning medium. Research shows that learning media such as Powtoon receive excellent ratings from experts, with a high average rating. Powtoon has also been used in the development of learning media in elementary schools. The results of the study showed that Powtoon media in learning was declared "very accurate" because the material provided met the established criteria. Powtoon is an application for creating animated videos that is designed simply so that users, including teachers, can produce innovative and creative learning materials without requiring special in-depth graphic design skills. Fitria (2018). Powtoon is a multimedia learning tool that combines visual, audio, and text elements in an animated format, which is effective in increasing student learning motivation. Wijayanti (2020). Powtoon is an animation-based media that is very helpful for students with special needs, including slow learners, because it is engaging, repetitive, and easy to understand (Wibowo, 2021).

3. Methodology

This study used Classroom Action Research (CAR) aimed at improving the beginning reading skills of *slow learners* through the use of Powtoon animated audio-visual media. CAR was chosen because it aims to improve teaching practices carried out by teachers in the classroom by implementing actions or interventions that can improve student learning outcomes.

Classroom Action Research (CAR) is a method used to provide Powtoon animated audiovisual media as an intervention to help students struggling with beginning reading. This research will be conducted in cycles consisting of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The results of one cycle will be used to improve the actions in the next cycle until optimal results are achieved.

4. Results and Discussion

This research was conducted in two separate cycles because, based on the researcher's observations during the initial cycle, two of the four students identified as *slow learners* had not shown significant progress in their ability to read vowels and simple sentences. This observation prompted the researcher to move on to the next cycle using a more intensive methodology that incorporated visual media. Dale's theoretical construct of the "Cone of Experience," along with statements made by Wirawan (2020), supports the idea that students facing educational challenges more easily understand material when presented concretely and visually. After the completion of the second cycle, it became clear that all four students showed significant progress, thus making further cycles unnecessary. The implementation of Powtoon learning media, characterized by interactive animated videos, has been empirically validated as an effective way to improve the basic reading skills of slow learners. The researcher observed that this media facilitated students in recognizing letters, distinguishing phonemes, and reading simple words with greater efficacy. These results align with Mayer's (2021) theoretical framework on multimedia learning, and are further corroborated by Sukardi (2024), who asserted that animated media significantly increases attention and engagement among slow learner students.

The early reading skills of *slow learners* showed a significant improvement after the implementation of audio-visual learning media, specifically using Powtoon animation. The pretest and posttest results in this study showed an increase in the average score of *slow learners* from 35 to 65, an increase of 85.71%. These findings indicate that the use of Powtoon significantly contributes to developing the early literacy of students with special learning needs. The media's engaging and interactive characteristics are well suited to the learning styles of students who require a strong visual and audio approach.

In terms of phonemic awareness, *slow learners* show substantial progress. Phonemics, the ability to recognize and differentiate sounds in language, is a key foundation for early reading. Stanovich (2019) emphasized that phonemic awareness is a key predictor of reading success. Students with difficulties recognizing phonemes tend to experience reading delays. Through Powtoon displays featuring sound repetition and letter animations, students can see and hear the relationship between letters and sounds simultaneously, thus helping *slow learners* better understand and differentiate phonemes more effectively.

Neuman and Roskos (2020) concluded in their research that audiovisual media significantly assists *slow learners* with special needs in improving literacy, particularly phonological awareness. In the context of slow learners, Powtoon media can build associations between letter shapes and their sounds and strengthen students' visual memory. This result is evident in students' improved ability to read and pronounce simple words such as "mama," "bola," and "mata" after participating in learning using attractive and repetitive Powtoon videos.

Improvements were also seen in simple word reading skills. After using Powtoon, students' average word reading score increased from 2.00 to 3.48 (on a 4-point scale). This indicates that students are beginning to read basic words more fluently and correctly. Ehri (2021) emphasized that a bottom-up approach to reading, which begins with letter and phoneme recognition and progresses to word formation, is highly effective for beginning readers. Powtoon supports this approach by displaying visual animations that align words with images, making them easier for students with learning disabilities to understand.

Learning motivation also improved. Based on Deci and Ryan's (2018) theory of self-determination, students' intrinsic motivation increased because *slow learners* felt in control of the learning process, felt competent, and had a fun learning experience. Powtoon presented learning in a fun, colorful, and interactive format, encouraging active student engagement. In interviews, several students reported enjoying learning because the videos featured animated characters and engaging sounds. Teachers also noted that students were more motivated than when using conventional learning methods.

Mayer (2021), in his theory of multimedia learning, states that learning will be more effective when information is presented simultaneously through text, images, and sound. This learning model is particularly helpful for *slow learners* who have limited memory and concentration. By presenting material visually and auditorily in Powtoon, students receive information through multiple sensory channels, which enhances their knowledge and retention of the material. This multimodal approach also accelerates the internalization of early reading skills.

Furthermore, the Mastery Learning approach, as redeveloped by Guskey (2020) from Bloom's ideas, states that every student can achieve mastery of the material provided they are given the right time and methods. *Slow learners* require repetition and longer study time. With the help of Powtoon, the material can be replayed in a fun way without boring students. This way, they don't feel left behind, and the learning process becomes more inclusive and tailored to their needs.

Observations revealed that previously passive and unfocused students were beginning to show a steady interest in the lesson. In fact, some students who previously struggled to distinguish letters like "b" and "d" were now able to read them correctly. This demonstrates that improvements are not only occurring in test scores but also in student learning behavior. Interactive visual media like Powtoon strengthen students' understanding of phonemic concepts that have previously been difficult for students to grasp using conventional methods.

Overall, improvements in the early reading skills of *slow learners* through Powtoon were evident across various aspects: from phonemic awareness and basic word reading skills to participation in learning, to increased motivation. Quantitative evidence from improved scores and qualitative evidence from observations and interviews indicate that this medium has significant potential to address learning challenges in students with learning disabilities. Powtoon can be a practical and effective solution for inclusive and meaningful learning.

Considering the findings, it can be concluded that animation-based learning media such as Powtoon significantly contributes to improving the early reading skills of *slow-learners* at Sangatta Adventist Elementary School. The 85.71% increase is strong evidence that audiovisual-based learning innovations are not only relevant but also transformative. These findings provide a basis for educators and policymakers to consider integrating visual media into the elementary school curriculum, particularly in efforts to improve the literacy of students with special needs.

The use of audiovisual-based learning media such as Powtoon plays a crucial role in improving the early reading skills of slow learners. This media displays information in visual and audio formats simultaneously, making it easier for students with cognitive limitations to understand the material. Based on Mayer's (2021) multimedia learning theory, slow learners learn better from reading and drawing than from reading words alone. In this case, Powtoon, as an animated medium, can activate dual-channel processes (visual and auditory) in students' brains, thereby accelerating their understanding of basic reading concepts such as letters and phonemes.

Slow learners tend to have difficulty processing complex information. They require a concrete and repetitive learning approach. According to research by Sukardi (2024), audiovisual-based animation media has been proven to help students with special needs understand subject matter through engaging visualizations and narratives. This way, students don't just passively receive the material but actively engage in the learning process. Powtoon videos provide a fun and engaging learning experience for slow learners, who often lose interest in conventional learning methods.

From a phonemic perspective, *slow learners* often struggle to recognize and differentiate letter sounds. Using Powtoons, which include the sounds of letter pronunciations and visually appealing letter displays, can help strengthen phonemic awareness. Ehri's (2019) theory emphasizes that phonemic skills are a key component in early reading. Through Powtoon

animations, students can simultaneously see and hear letter pronunciations, which is very helpful in building associations between symbols (letters) and sounds (phonemes).

In addition to phonemic skills, mastery of simple words is another indicator of early reading ability. Powtoon can present animations of simple words in a visual context, such as images of objects or activities related to the word. According to Neuman & Roskos (2020), visual media associated with image context can improve students' memory retention of new words. In this study, students who initially could only read one syllable began to be able to read two to three syllables after participating in two cycles of animated video-based learning.

In terms of learning motivation, *slow learners* often feel inferior or lack confidence when they can't keep up with lessons like their peers. Animated media like Powtoon can create a positive learning environment and reduce learning anxiety. According to Deci & Ryan (2018), in their self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation can be fostered by providing enjoyable learning experiences that align with students' competencies. When students feel capable and engaged in learning, they will be more enthusiastic about participating in learning activities, even if they previously felt behind.

Students' active engagement in the learning process also increased significantly when Powtoon was used. In observations conducted by researchers, students who were previously passive and tended to be quiet began to actively answer questions, repeat readings in animations, and even request video replays. This aligns with Vygotsky's scaffolding theory (in a modern context), which states that assistance or guidance in the form of visual media can encourage students to reach their zone of proximal development. Powtoon becomes an extension of teacher scaffolding, enabling students to learn more independently with audio-visual support.

From a teacher's perspective, using Powtoon also simplifies the delivery of basic learning materials. Teachers no longer have to draw on the board or read aloud, as the animations convey the learning message in an engaging way. This increases time efficiency and allows teachers to engage with students personally. According to Bandura (2020), observational learning is highly effective for slow-learning children, as they learn by watching and imitating what is presented.

The findings of this study also showed a significant difference in pretest and posttest results. The average score of *slow learner students* increased from 35 to 65, representing an 85.71% improvement. This indicates the effectiveness of learning interventions using Powtoon media in improving reading skills. Mayer (2021) also stated that consistent and interactive visual content can improve academic performance by up to 60% in slow learner students experiencing learning difficulties, especially in symbolic subjects like reading.

The positive impact of using Powtoon is also evident in students' social-emotional aspects. *Slow learners* who were previously withdrawn or shy about speaking began to show confidence in reading in front of the class. A supportive and non-pressuring learning environment, coupled with enjoyable media, can foster an inclusive learning atmosphere. According to Santrock (2019), a safe and positive social environment is crucial for student success in the learning process, especially for children with special learning needs.

Overall, the researchers concluded that the use of audiovisual-based learning media such as Powtoon had a significant and comprehensive impact on the early reading skills of slow learners. Phonemic skills, word mastery, motivation, engagement, and academic performance all showed positive results after the implementation of this media. Therefore, innovative, technology-friendly learning approaches such as Powtoon should be considered a primary strategy in early literacy learning, especially in inclusive schools or schools with diverse student abilities, such as Sangatta Adventist Elementary School.

The use of audiovisual-based learning media, particularly Powtoon animated videos, has a significant impact on improving the beginning reading skills of slow learners. This media provides a simultaneous visual and auditory approach, which is highly effective for students with cognitive disabilities. By presenting letters, words, and sounds in an integrated manner through engaging animations, Powtoon helps students understand basic phonemic concepts in a more enjoyable way. According to Mayer (2021), multimedia learning media improves retention and conceptual understanding because students learn through two channels of information: visual and auditory.

Slow learners have special learning needs, including requiring more time and a concrete approach. In the context of early reading, they often struggle to distinguish letter sounds and read simple syllables. By using interactive animation, Powtoon makes learning more accessible

and understandable. Neuman and Roskos (2020) showed that using animated videos helps children with learning difficulties recognize the relationship between symbols (letters) and sounds, which is the foundation of early literacy skills.

Powtoon videos reinforce phonemic learning concepts through repetition of sounds and movements. For example, when a letter is displayed in animation and clearly articulated, students gain repeated exposure to the sound and shape of that letter. This greatly helps *slow learners* absorb information gradually. Research by Sadiman et al. (2020) states that animation-based learning supports gradual material delivery and improves student concentration because it presents information in a concrete and engaging way.

In addition to improving phonemic comprehension, Powtoon also encourages active student participation in learning. Students not only watch but also repeat sounds, imitate words, and try to reread the material presented in the video. This aligns with the concept of "learning by doing" in Vygotsky's constructivism theory, which emphasizes the importance of active involvement and visual aids in helping students build understanding. Within the zone of proximal development (ZPD), Powtoon can function as a scaffolding tool that encourages students to achieve higher levels of ability through guidance.

The influence of audiovisual media on learning motivation is also a crucial factor in improving reading skills. *Slow learners* tend to lose motivation easily if learning is uninteresting or too abstract. In this case, Powtoon videos serve as a fun presentation tool, full of color, sound, and movement. Based on Deci & Ryan's (2018) Self-Determination theory, intrinsic motivation increases when students feel interested, capable, and in control of the learning process. Enjoyable media encourages higher engagement, which ultimately has a positive impact on learning outcomes.

Observations and interviews in this study showed that students were more focused and engaged during learning using Powtoon compared to conventional learning. Some students even showed interest in repeating the videos independently, indicating an intrinsic motivation to learn. This fact supports research by Sukardi (2024), which states that animated media such as Powtoon are effective in increasing learning motivation in students with special needs due to their interactive and easy-to-understand nature.

Furthermore, an audiovisual-based approach also plays a crucial role in improving the short-term memory of slow learners. They tend to forget information quickly if presented verbally or through text alone. However, with Powtoon, learning material is delivered through a repetitive combination of visuals and audio. This aligns with Sweller's Cognitive Load theory, which states that combining multiple information channels reduces cognitive load and facilitates the process of storing information in long-term memory (Mayer, 2021).

Another advantage of Powtoon is its flexibility. Teachers can adapt the content to suit their students' abilities and needs. For example, if a student doesn't yet understand the pronunciation of a particular letter, the teacher can replay the video section related to that letter. This aligns with the Mastery Learning approach, redeveloped by Guskey (2020), which states that every student can master material if given the right time, method, and approach. Thus, Powtoon facilitates individualized learning that supports the learning pace of slow learners.

From a teacher's perspective, using Powtoon also simplifies material delivery. Teachers no longer need to manually explain concepts repeatedly, as the material is systematically packaged in videos. This saves energy and allows teachers to focus more on assisting individual students. In the long term, using Powtoon can also improve the quality of learning in inclusive classrooms by providing access to learning that is responsive to the diverse needs of students.

5. Conclusion

The use of audiovisual-based learning media, particularly Powtoon animated videos, has a positive impact on the reading skills of slow learners. This media helps improve students' focus, motivation, and comprehension in recognizing and reading simple words. There was a significant increase in the beginning reading skills of slow learner students after using audio-visual media. Based on the posttest results, the average student results increased compared to the pretest results, indicating that this method is effective in improving their beginning reading skills. The use of Powtoon media in early reading instruction for slow learners was also effective in increasing engagement and motivation, with significant improvements in students' reading skills as evidenced by pretest and posttest results. Teachers and students responded

positively to the use of Powtoon, despite some technical implementation challenges. This research successfully developed a learning product using Powtoon animated audio-visual media to improve the early reading skills of slow learner students in elementary school. Powtoon media has proven effective in attracting students' attention and helping them understand early reading concepts, such as recognizing letters, syllables, and simple words. The use of Powtoon animation provides attractive visualizations and facilitates students' understanding, thus motivating them to be more active in learning. The findings of the study indicate that this media can significantly improve the reading fluency and comprehension of slow learner students.

The use of animated audio-visual media like Powtoon has great potential for implementation in elementary school learning, especially for slow learners who require a more engaging and diverse approach. Powtoon not only facilitates comprehension but also increases students' motivation to participate in reading lessons. The findings of this study demonstrate the importance of integrating technology into the elementary education curriculum. With interactive animated media, early reading instruction can be more varied and enjoyable, adapting it to the needs of students with learning difficulties. A more flexible curriculum with a technology-based approach can improve teaching effectiveness.

This product also has direct implications for more individualized teaching methods tailored to the needs of slow learners. Media like Powtoon can be an effective alternative in helping students overcome learning difficulties, particularly in beginning reading.

References

Atkinson, R. C., & Shiffrin, R. M. (1968). Human memory: A proposed system and its control processes. In K. W. Spence (Ed.), *The psychology of learning and motivation* (Vol. 2). Academic Press.

Bagaskorowati, N. (2021). *Difficulties in learning to read in slow learner students*. Deepublish.

Bandura, A. (2017). *Social learning theory*. General Learning Press.

Bloom, B. S. (1968). Learning for mastery. *Evaluation Comment, 1*(2), 1–12.

Chall, J. S. (2000). *The academic achievement challenge*. Guilford Press.

Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2013). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Springer.

Ehri, L. C. (2004). Development of sight word reading: Phases and findings. In R. B. Ruddell & N. J. Unrau (Eds.), *Theoretical models and processes of reading* (5th ed.). International Reading Association.

Fitria, M. (2018). Development of Powtoon learning media for elementary school science learning. *Scientific Journal of Elementary Education, 5*(1), 25–33.

Gardner, H. (2011). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. Basic Books.

Gibson, E. J., & Levin, H. (2021). *The psychology of reading*. MIT Press.

Guthrie, J. T., & Wigfield, A. (2017). Engagement and motivation in reading. In K. A. Renninger & S. E. Hidi (Eds.), *The Cambridge handbook of motivation and learning*. Cambridge University Press.

Lerner, J., & Johns, B. (2015). *Learning disabilities and related disabilities: Strategies for success* (13th ed.). Cengage Learning.

Maslow, A. H. (1953). *Motivation and personality*. Harper & Row.

Mayer, R. E. (2021). *Multimedia learning* (3rd ed.). Cambridge University Press.

McKenna, M. C., & Stahl, K. A. D. (2015). *Assessment for reading instruction* (3rd ed.). Guilford Press.

National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

Neuman, S. B., & Roskos, K. (2020). *Literacy and the youngest learner*. Scholastic Inc.

Piaget, J. (1952). *The origins of intelligence in children*. International Universities Press.

Sadiman, A. S., Rahardjo, R., Haryono, A., & Rahardjito. (2020). *Media pendidikan: Pengertian, pengembangan, dan pemanfaatan*. Raja Grafindo Persada.

Santrock, J. W. (2018). *Educational psychology* (6th ed.). McGraw-Hill Education.

Shalikhah, F. (2016). The use of Powtoon animation media in Indonesian language learning. *Journal of Education, 4*(2), 88–95.