



## Implementation of the BOOST Elementary Program (*Optimal Learning with Educated Students*) to Improve Reading Literacy Skills of Botok Magetan State Elementary School Students

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### ABSTRACT

The BOOST SD (*Optimal Learning with Educated Students*) program is implemented at SD Negeri Botok, Magetan, to improve the reading literacy skills of students in grades 1 to 3 with low literacy levels. This program lasts three months, from September to November 2023, with stages of need identification, development of learning tools, implementation, and evaluation. The methods used include initial observation, discussion with teachers, and the development of tools such as textbooks, visual presentations, and assessment instruments. The evaluation was carried out through pre-test and post-test, showing a significant improvement in students' reading ability, especially in letter recognition, word reading, and sentence reading. The program emphasizes the importance of targeted interventions and can serve as a practical model for addressing literacy challenges in other primary schools.

## INTRODUCTION

The Independent Learning Independent Campus (MBKM) policy aims to improve the quality of higher education through learning programs outside the study program, including Thematic Real Work Lectures (KKN-T). State University of Surabaya supports this program by involving students in community empowerment activities (Rizka et al., 2020). One of the flagship programs is the KKN-T Teaching Assistance, which focuses on improving elementary school students' reading and numeracy literacy. This program is relevant in answering educational challenges, especially in rural areas such as Botok Village, Karas District, and Magetan Regency, which have limited basic education facilities (Mujiwati et al., 2023).

The observations at SD Negeri Botok show that most grades 1 to 3 students have low reading and numeracy literacy skills. This problem reflects the national education challenge, where the 2018 PISA survey placed Indonesia in the 7th lowest ranking out of 79 countries in the mathematics category, indicating the low numeracy literacy of Indonesian students. In the same report, the OECD emphasized that reading and numeracy literacy are the leading indicators of student success in facing the challenges of the 21st century (OECD, 2019). Reading literacy, for example, is the ability to understand, use, and reflect on texts to achieve goals and participate in society (Adinda et al., 2022).

In response to these challenges, the BOOST SD (*Optimal Learning with Educated Students*) program was designed to improve students' reading and numeracy literacy skills through an interactive and personalized approach (Kuswanti, 2023). With intensive guidance and creative materials, this program supports MBKM policies and aims to create a basic education empowerment model that can be replicated in other regions. This program is expected to build a solid foundation of students' literacy while equipping them with essential skills to face global demands.



## METHOD

Based on several critical indicators, observations were made on students in grades 1, 2, and 3 to identify their reading abilities. These indicators include the ability to read vowels and consonants in words and sentences, read words containing the letters /ng/ and /ny/, and read simple sentences with two or more words (Hornung et al., 2017). In addition, observation also records students' ability to read sentences with a particular structure, such as statements, questions, or commands. The results of this observation are used as a basis for designing learning tools and strategies that suit the needs of students (William et al., 2014).

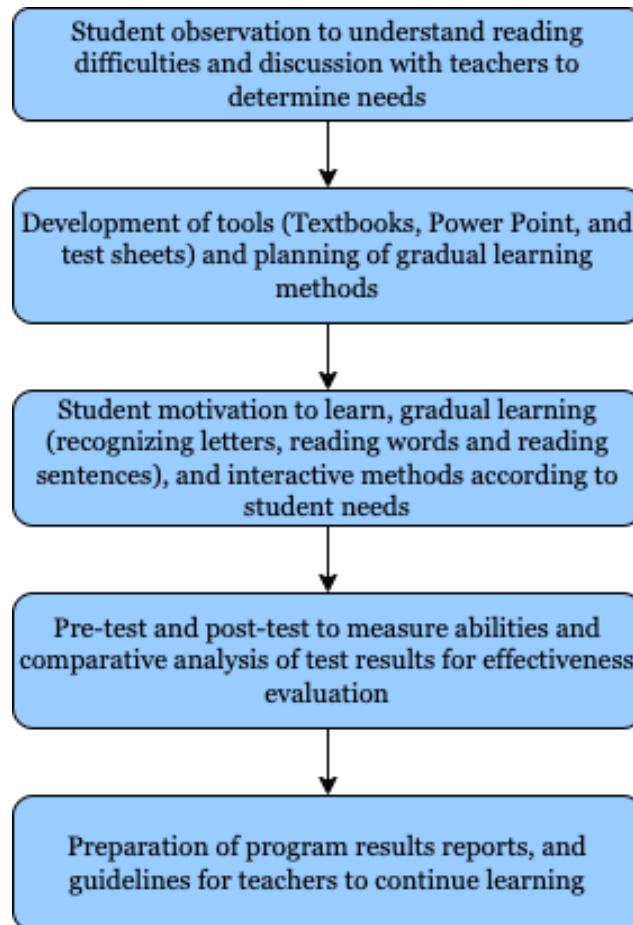
**Table 1.** Observation Indicators

Statement
Students can read vowels in a word or sentence
Students can read consonant letter symbols in a word or sentence
Students can read the symbols of the letters /ng/ and /ny/ in a word or sentence
Students can read words that contain the letter "ny"
Students can read words that contain the letter "ng"
Students can string the word arrangement into a simple sentence that is right
Students can read sentences in two-words
Students can read sentences with more than three words
Students can read statement sentences in a reading correctly
Students can read the question sentences in a reading correctly
Students can read command sentences in reading correctly

Planning involves the development of tools such as textbooks for gradual learning, PPTs as visual aids, and test sheets for pre-test and post-test. All devices are designed to support students' learning interactively and gradually according to their literacy level. The implementation stage took place from September 4 to November 30, 2023, starting with student motivation to increase the enthusiasm for learning. Learning is carried out gradually, from knowing letters to reading simple sentences, with methods adjusted based on student needs. The work procedures for the community service activities to be carried out are shown in **Figure 1**.

Program evaluation is done through pre-tests and post-tests using the *Student Reading Ability Test Assessment Sheet*. Pre-tests are used to measure students' initial abilities, while post-tests are conducted after the program is completed to assess their improvement in abilities. The aspects evaluated include recognizing letters, reading word sentences, and reading aloud. The evaluation results were analyzed by comparing pre-test and post-test data to measure the program's effectiveness.

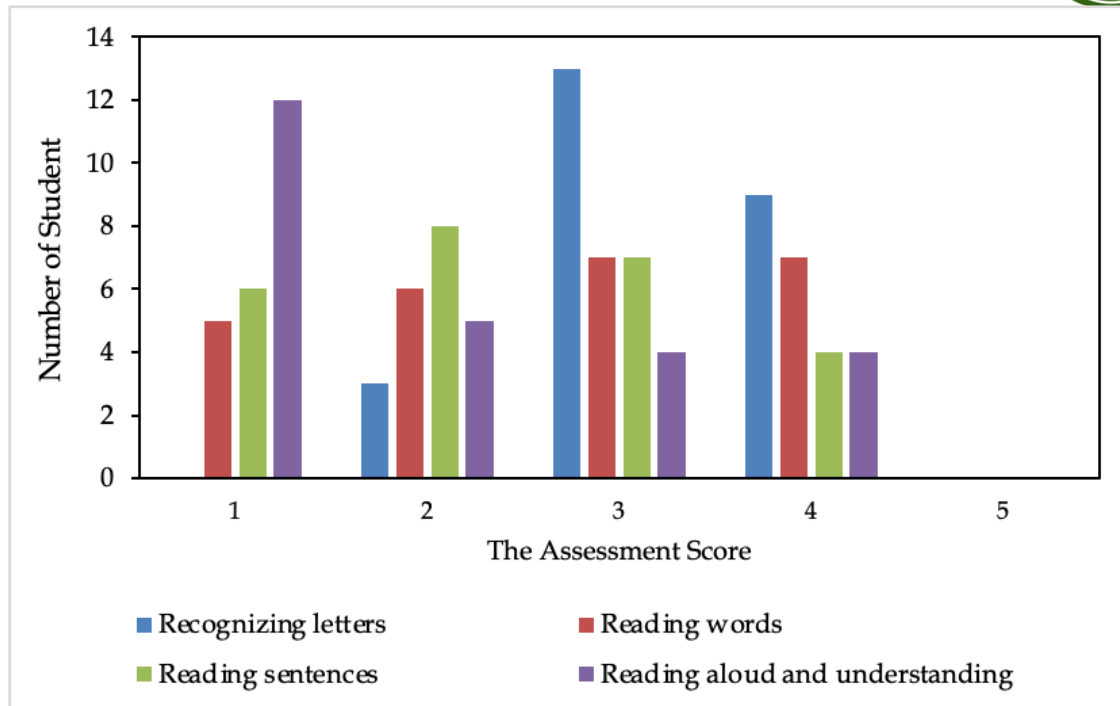
The program also noted obstacles such as low student motivation and lack of parental involvement, which were overcome through more interactive learning methods and teacher coordination. After the program is completed, module guidance is given to teachers so that they can continue learning continuously.



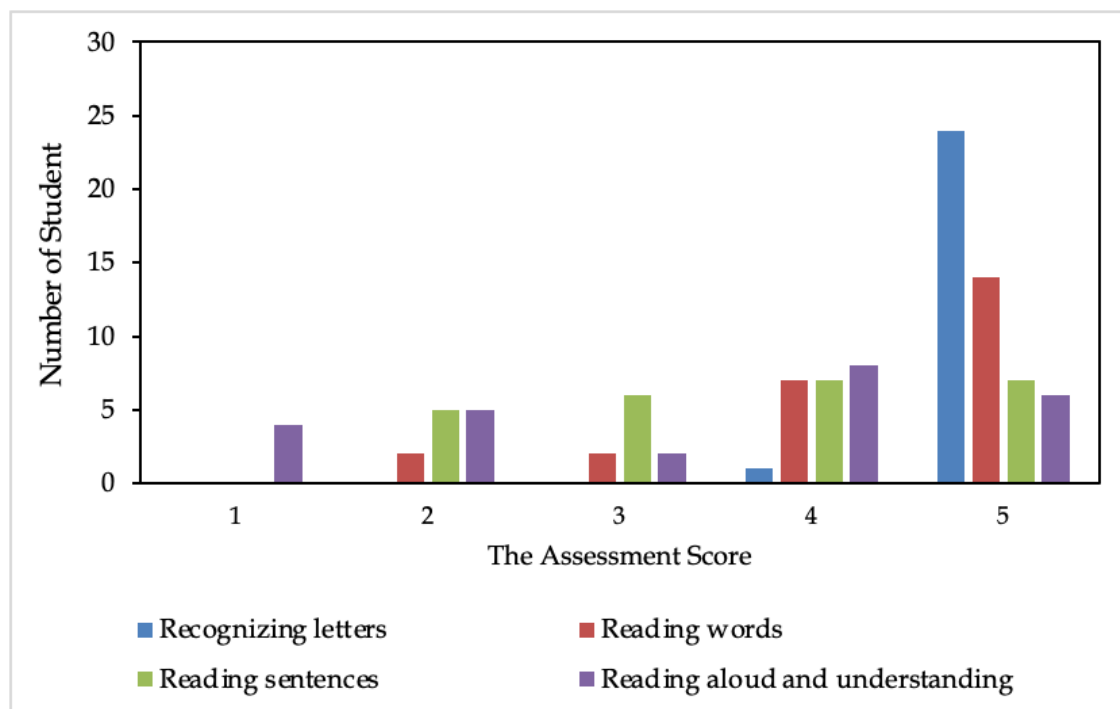
**Figure 1.** Procedure flow for PKM activities

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The BOOST SD (Optimal Learning with Educated Students) program is implemented at SDN Botok, Magetan, with the primary goal of improving students' reading literacy skills in grades 1, 2, and 3. The program lasts three months, from September 4 to November 30, 2023, and is designed to address low literacy levels with an interactive and targeted approach.



**Figure 2.** Pre-test Assessment Result Chart



**Figure 3.** Post-test Assessment Result Chart

Based on **Figures 2** and **3**, the *pre-test* and *post-test* evaluations above show students' reading skills development. The recorded data showed a consistent improvement in every aspect of reading, ranging from knowing letters, reading words, reading sentences, and reading aloud to reading comprehension. The program's results showed an improvement in reading skills in most students, including children who were previously



unable to recognize the letters of the alphabet. In addition, interest in reading has also increased thanks to the use of learning media such as illustrated textbooks and presentations (PPT), which are designed to attract attention and make the learning process easier. This increase shows the commitment and effort made by students to improve their reading skills.

The program also faces challenges, such as low levels of student focus and the lack of parental role in supporting the learning process at home. To overcome this, the program team prepares relevant teaching materials, applies innovative learning methods such as visual-based activities and educational games, and motivates students through a personal approach and appreciation for their achievements. Over time, learners have overcome difficulties they may have faced before, as evidenced by a significant spike in scores or progress in each reading category. The results show that BOOST (Optimal Learning of Educated Students in Grades 1 & 2) has increased students' enthusiasm for learning, as evidenced by the significant improvement in learning outcomes. Thus, the BOOST program has proven effective as an additional educational program that can improve students' reading literacy skills.

This approach improves the technical reading ability and encourages students' confidence. However, further involvement from parents and the surrounding community is needed to ensure the sustainability of the results achieved. This collaboration is essential to sustainably support students' literacy development, primarily through home learning assistance. Evaluation and strengthening cooperation between schools, parents, and the community is an important step to maintain and improve the results of this program.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion that can be obtained from this PKM activity is the first realization of Line Follower robot-making training activities that are easy to apply and at a relatively affordable cost for students. With this activity, it is expected that students will be able to use and participate in various competitions. The results of the questionnaire responses from 15 students are as follows: understanding of the material is 80% (good), suitability of the material is 81% (very good), usefulness is 83% (very good), quality of instructor delivery is 87% (very good), facilities and equipment are 93% (very good), and adequacy of training time is 83% (very good). The percentage of response sheet scores mostly show very good results, only in understanding the material that shows good results.

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