

## Developing Speed Reading Skills In Young Learners

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**Abstract:** *This study is aimed to develop the speed reading skills in young learners and some issues faced along the learning. Speed reading is usually conducted in adult students and very few applied in young learners. It is considered an important goal of reading instruction. This research applied descriptive qualitative method by conducting a close observation technique where researcher acted as a non-participant observer and didn't participate and interfere to 5 subjects in teaching. The findings showed that speed reading strategy surprisingly could be applied in young learners. and it helps the young learners to get better result and achievement in reading This strategy is so simple, effective and easy to apply and strongly recommended to be applied in teaching young learners.*

**Keywords:** *developing, speed reading, young learners*

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### Introduction

Reading is very important skill that the students must be mastered, because the reading cannot be separated in the process of teaching and learning. There has been a growing body of literature on timed reading or speed reading as one of the methods to increase the students' reading speed (Chung, 2007), (Anderson, 1999), (Tran & Nation, 2014), (Mckool, 2000), (Wyk & Louw, 2008), (Nunan, 2016), and (Macalister, 2010). A course of this kind usually consists of around 20 texts of equal length and difficulty level, each accompanied by comprehension questions. During the course, the students read the texts and keep a record of their reading rate and comprehension scores. Although little research has explored the effects of reading speed improvement in young learners, a very few studies are still conducted for young learners. Speed reading could become a universal skill for all children if it were just made available in the right way to the general public. At that time the only speed reading courses available were those which cost hundreds of dollars per student. Also, these same courses were directed at adults (mostly college students and business owners). This research is aimed to develop the speed reading skills in young learners and some issues faced along the learning.

### Literature Review

#### *Definition of Speed Reading*

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Reading comprehension is important element to develop children reading skill and their ability to obtain an education. However to comprehend text clearly, is not an easy matter. It is an active process which needs strategy to translate every symbol that included in the text (Rizkoh, Ohoiwutun, & Thamrin, 2014). While reading fluency has along history in first language acquisition, but has only become an area of re-search interest in second language learning in the last few decades. Recent studies in English as a foreign language (EFL) reading fluency have looked at methods to increase reading speed and ways to assess reading fluency. Reading fast is considered an important goal of reading instruction. Some students read word by word, and thus comprehend poorly. While reading, three types of action occur: fixations on certain words, jumps to the next word, and moves backward to a word already read. Learners who read slowly are typically (1) fixating frequently, (2) spending a long time on each fixation, and (3) looking back frequently at what they have already read

### **Steps of Speed Reading**

Speed reading can be increased by following some steps. Spargo and Willingston (1980:10) describe the steps of speed reading: 1. Previewing main idea. Good readers preview the selection first. This helps to make them good and fast readers. 2. Read for meaning. Good readers see beyond the words, they read for meaning. This makes them faster reader 3. Grasp paragraph sense. The paragraph is the basic unit of the meaning. Good readers know how to find the main ideas of paragraph quickly. 4. Organize facts. Understanding how the facts all fit together to deliver the author's message is, after all, the reason for reading. Good readers organize facts as they read. In order to achieve the following steps above, As Chung and Nation in Macalister (2010:105) recommend, "Speed reading course should be included in the very reading class. While Nation and Macalister in Macalister (2010:106) suggest, "Reading fluency activities should involve a speed reading course within a controlled vocabulary." Meanwhile the targets of reading speed for different purpose differ. Nation (2005:24) argues "Speed reading is affected by range of factors including the purpose of reading, and the difficulty of the text." It shows that the readers will stuck on reading a paper because they find the difficulties of the text such as the vocabulary, grammatical construction, discourse, and background knowledge.

### **The Importance of Speed Reading**

There are many methods in reading skills, the popular one is speed reading method, and it has an important role in reading skill of a person. Speed reading method will help students to get better result and achievement in reading. By speed reading, the students can read the information more quickly and they may get better understanding of it as they will hold more of it in short term memory. As in [www.educationuk.or.id](http://www.educationuk.or.id), speed reading aims to improve reading skill by: Increasing the number of words in each block: This needs a conscious effort. Try to expand the number of words that you read at a time. Practice will help the students to read faster. Reducing fixation time: The minimum length of time needed to read each block is probably only a quarter of a second. By pushing their selves to reduce the time that is taken, they will get better at picking up information quickly. Reducing skip back: To reduce the number of time that your eyes skip back to a previous word or sentence, run a pointer along the line as you read. This could be a finger, a pencil or a pen. Reducing Skip Backs. Slow readers have a bad reading technique. They tend to read and reread the same phrase repeatedly. This technique of making "regressions" doubles or worse triples reading time and affect their performance in grasping what they need to know. It usually does not even help you to understand the subject better. It is true

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that a single careful, attentive speed reading may not be always enough for you to understand the subject matter entirely.

## **Kids Learn Easily**

In fact, children catch on to speed reading much easier and better than anybody ever expected. Compared to adults, children have more nerve cells that can actively create new connections. This is why they can learn new languages, learn to play an instrument, or pick up a new sport more easily than adults can. To encourage these connections and brain flexibility, it is good to expose the children to a lot of different experiences and activities early and often especially in reading. The various materials can be given in stimulating their ability in reading by applying speed reading strategy. Children are a marvel of the learning world. This is especially true of learning foreign languages. In fact, children who speak a second language can learn a third one even faster. Of course, language learning is challenging, but children are actually better at it than adults. When adults hit a certain point, learning becomes a bit more rigid than it was when the world was vast and mysterious in their youthful eyes. There are a few reasons as to why children excel in learning another language. They are (1) new things are easier for kids because the brains of children are still developing their neurological pathways, new things are just easier for them to absorb. And they do exactly that, *absorb*. Children are learning in passive ways. Songs, games, and all sorts of other experiences are passively adding to their cognitive development of language. (2) Brain Over Classroom; This is an *adults versus children* language learning point that builds on developed brains and developing brains. Adults have often been in classrooms enough that they have already learned how to learn. Children have not. Once an adult has applied structure to the learning process and the technicalities of language, starting from square one is exponentially more difficult. Before a child's brain has developed these more rigid academic constructs, language acquisition is happening within a much more receptive brain. (3) They Actually Want To Learn; as we get older, you'll notice that people focus their academic energy in increasingly specialized places and many other things are left by the wayside. Children are open to learning and eager to learn everything, which makes their rate of absorption much greater. The human ability to learn is fascinating. Language acquisition in children is especially fascinating. The fact remains that anyone can learn a new language at any age and we encourage everyone to explore their options there. We're just certain that when it starts early, it's a much smoother learning process

## **Research Methodology**

This descriptive qualitative research aimed to develop the speed reading skills in young learners.. The subject of the study was EFL 5 young learners living nearby the researchers. They learn in the kindergarten school, TK Aisyiyah Bustanul Athfal, Medan in the academic year of 2019/2020. For this study, the researchers conducted close observation technique; the researcher acted as a non-participant observer and didn't participate and interfere in teaching.

## **Findings and Discussio**

The result showed that children learned and mastered the skill of speed reading far more easily than adults do. It literally became a natural part of them if they learned it by age 12 or so, just as much as speaking. English is a natural part of them.

The findings were shown in the table below:

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No.	Students. Name	Speed Reading/words per minute (wpm)		
		1st week	2 <sup>nd</sup> week	3 <sup>rd</sup> week
1	HAS	130 wpm	160 wpm	185 wpm
2	ASR	75 wpm	95 wpm	100 wpm
3	IML	165 wpm	185 wpm	190 wpm
4	YR	110 wpm	125 wpm	150 wpm
5	SRQ	110 wpm	125 wpm	130 wpm

From the table above, it could be seen that there was a progress among the students from week one, two and three. The lowest speed showed in the third week was 130 words per minute then the highest speed was 190 words per minute. It was proven that speed reading strategy can also be applied in young learners. Older kids can get good at speed reading but they have to work harder at it. The professionals are locking out most of their star students and only admitting their worst prospects. They don't promote their speed reading courses to kids for three reasons:

- Money. The adults have it, the kids don't.
- The methods they use to teach speed reading are so rigorous that no young children could survive them. I took one speed reading course that required one hour of homework each night, much of it in the form of written notes or "recall patterns." No kids will ever keep up with that amount of paperwork.
- It probably has never occurred to them that children could master the speed reading skill very easily, as long as it's presented to them in the right way.

The following method for teaching kids to speed read may not be the only way to teach them. It may not even be the best. But speed reading is so simple, effective and easy to apply.

**Conclusion and Suggestion**

Speed reading strategy surprisingly can be applied in young learners and it helps the young learners to get better result and achievement in reading This strategy is so simple, effective and easy to apply and strongly recommended to be applied in teaching young learners.

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