

Using SIMPKB to Improve PPG Students' Reading Comprehension during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to improve the reading ability of PPG students during the COVID-19 pandemic through the SIMPKB application which is connected to zoom and google meet. The research design used in this study was classroom action with four stages. While quantitative data came from students' reading texts before and after the test, qualitative data was collected through interviews and field notes from tutors. By compiling the data, categorizing the data, developing interpretations, and summarizing the findings, then the qualitative data is evaluated. Meanwhile, descriptive quantitative analysis was used to analyze quantitative data. The results showed that the students had mastered the skills to identify the main concepts, draw conclusions, and separate certain information from the text. In addition, they see SIMPKB as a supportive and flexible learning instrument. To ensure that SIMPKB is functioning properly, the PPG admin discusses how to improve the reading comprehension process of students through careful thinking, planning, and reflection. Statistical analysis of the students' pre and post test scores showed an increase from 66.9 to 86.9. The average post-test score for students is higher than the pre-test score. This study found that the ease of use of the SIMPKB program and the ability of tutors and lecturers to track student progress during the learning process helped students learn to read well.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 virus outbreak has a very broad impact on the joints of life, including in field of education. So that the government implements the Education policy in The Emergency Period for the Spread of the Corona Virus. This is to anticipate the spread of the corona virus in schools and colleges. One of the points that emphasized by the government is that learning carried out in schools and colleges are transitioning to online learning at home. Learning done from home using a laptop, computer, or smartphone accompanied by various applications that support the learning process. However, online learning that has been implemented since the Covid-19 pandemic has experienced some of the obstacles faced by students and educators. We didn't realize that the theory of learning strategies so far mostly only focuses on conventional learning process (face to face). So that when it happens emergency phenomenon, the learning strategy will not work effectively and efficient. Here, distance learning using online media. It is felt by the community that it burdens students by allocating funds especially for the purchase of expensive packages. In response to this problem, the campus and school implements the government recommendations and also pay attention to the condition of the community with the learning process method community based online and offline. Community-based learning process here is to provide WiFi assistance to students for learning use group in a predetermined place with due regard health protocol (Fauzi, 2020).

In 2019's deadly and contagious COVID-19 virus has had an impact on every part of life worldwide. The education industry has also been affected by this epidemic, and this sorrow is becoming more widespread worldwide (Dhawan, 2020). Schools and institutions were compelled to temporarily close due of the COVID-19 outbreak. Educational institutions struggle to find solutions to difficult problems. A different method of managing the teaching and learning process is to switch from offline to online education. The idea of online learning as a substitute was imagined as being more inventive and adaptable because it allows students to learn on their own (Dhawan, 2020; Putrawangsa & Hasanah, 2018).

Reading comprehension abilities should be taught by teachers to students learning English online. Reading comprehension is an active activity that involves engaging with written language and simultaneously extracting and building meaning (Samad, Jannah, & Fitriani, 2017). According to Varita (2017), the goal of teaching reading is to help people become proficient and effective readers. Students should therefore be well-versed in all facets of reading. In actuality, the online teaching and learning process presents a number of challenges. Due to their limited vocabulary, the PPG students' participants in this action research found it challenging to identify the main idea, select the supporting details for each paragraph, draw implicit conclusions, and comprehend the entire text, according to preliminary observation and a test at the start of the semester.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The instructor utilized Virtual Class APP, SIMPKB, Zoom, Google Meet, YouTube, Google Forms, and WhatsApp during the online class. However, during the initial interview, the teacher mentioned that she was thinking about using a different platform to help students learn to read. According to Tri (2021), SIMPKB is a government program aimed to develop teachers in Indonesia. This program has the aim of developing the professional quality of a teacher in order to create a better and quality education. Through SIMPKB learning teachers, students are expected to have a better understanding and deepening of learning materials such as applied sciences, skills, social sciences, and others. Later, students will get quality knowledge. In addition, good and quality learning outcomes can be a benchmark in increasing the position or profession of a teacher. SIMPKB can be followed by all teachers, but there are certain criteria if you want to participate in this activity. If you want to take part in this activity, teachers must have scores from the UKG (Teacher Competency Test) results with a minimum score of 65, ranging from 3 to 10 competency groups. If you don't have UKG scores, then the teacher must take UKG first.

To match the needs, circumstances, and conditions of their students, teachers should choose an appropriate platform. Since SIMPKB offers so many interesting features and activities, the researchers and teacher selected it as a learning tool for teaching reading. SIMPKB alters how lessons are taught in addition to presenting slides (Delacruz, 2014). Therefore, "How might the adoption of SIMPKB benefit the students' reading learning process?" was the research topic for this study. This study is anticipated to serve as a resource for English teachers looking to enhance the caliber of their reading instruction and support their students' learning.

The cognitive and linguistic processes of word recognition, meaning comprehension, and reader engagement are all part of the reading activity (Habok, Magyar, & Hui, 2019). (Aprizani, 2016). There are lower-level and higher-level capabilities for these procedures (Grabe, 2009). Specific syntactic and morphological processes, phonological awareness, word identification, and semantic process are examples of lower-level abilities. Higher-ability reading is the process by which readers actively comprehend the meaning of the passage by doing things like identifying the primary idea, integrating ideas from different phrases, etc. interpreting, understanding, and accomplishing the reading objective. Additionally, readers' cognition, control, and reflection on the text are used in the higher-level abilities to achieve their specific goals (Habók et al., 2019). Reading for understanding is the goal of the reading assignment for PPG students in Indonesia. Understanding the text's content is a key component of reading comprehension. The level of information and comprehension required for this active thinking process varies among readers (Sahardin, Mukarramah, & Hanafiah, 2015). Determining the primary concept, differentiating details from facts, drawing conclusions, and understanding terminology are all aspects of reading comprehension (Mikulecky & Jeffries, 2007; Sari, Fitriani, & Emafetery, 2019; Komariah, Ramadhona, & Silviyanti, 2015; Nasir, Sofyan, & Haqqini, 2019; Sahardin et al., 2015).

Based on Hammond (1992) and Sritrakarn (2020) divided the cycle of the Genre-Based Approach into four sections: developing the field's knowledge (BKOF), modeling the text (MOT), jointly creating the text (JCOT), and independently creating the text (ICOT). These four cycles are still applied to teaching today. Using a genre-based approach, all English skills, including speaking, writing, reading, and listening, can be taught (Ningsih, 2015; Angraini & Rozimela, 2020). Teachers who want to be successful at teaching reading must pay close attention to the nature of the reading process, the appropriate reading activities, and effective classroom management. This technique has been proposed by numerous scholars over the years to assist students' needs in various educational environments to match the expectations of potential readers (Huang & Zhang, 2019; Derewianka, 2003).

The first stage of teaching reading comprehension using the genre-based approach is BKOF. The teacher helps the students at this stage by establishing a cultural context, exchanging personal stories, talking about vocabulary, and presenting grammatical patterns related to the text. This stage's main goal is to acquire information about the topic's content (Enli, 2015). The teacher introduces a text model to the class and has a discussion on the text's purpose or social function in the second step, known as MOT. In this stage, students learn social function, text structure, and language features through viewing a model of a text, reading the model of a text, and providing input texts. JCOT is the third stage. It enables students to: (1) investigate the relationship between the field's topic and the genre's aim; (2) apply their field expertise to the composition of the text; The best way to organize knowledge about the subject into a written text should be discussed with the teacher and other students in steps three through five. Students should also reflect on their understanding of the genre's schematic structure and linguistic characteristics and broaden their understanding of some of the differences between spoken and written text. The stage in this study will be altered, though, so that the learner can practice reading comprehension while also learning more about the text's organization and linguistic aspects. ICOT is the last step. Students are actively involved in this stage as they try to understand the content and respond to questions about it.

METHODS

The model developed by Kemmis and McTaggart (2014) was used in this action research study to identify issues that arose during the online teaching and learning of reading as well as to provide potential solutions. This study was carried out in four stages: basic research, planning, action and observation, and reflection. These actions provided feedback on whether or not efforts to improve the students' of PPG reading learning process were successful.

At one English Education Study Program of PPG class of Universitas Khairun, Ternate, 30 of PPG students took part in the study. There were 24 ladies and 6 males among the students. They were in the range of 25 and 45 years old. While some of the students in the class are from Central Java, Jakarta, NTT, Makassar and the majority of them are from Java. They are all fluent in the Indonesian language and English language.

This study's data included both qualitative and quantitative information. Data was gathered by the researchers through interviews, field notes, observations, and reading test results. The students were questioned as a reflection following the teaching and learning process, and the teacher was interviewed both before and after doing the research. The inquiries concerned the classroom activities (Harmer, 2007; Brown, 2007); the teacher's instruction (Harmer, 2007; Nunan, 1989); the attitudes and reading skills of the students (Graves, 1999; Nunan, 1989); the materials and instructional media (Hashim, Md. Yunus, Amin Embi, and Mohamed Ozir, 2017; Brown, 2007); the assessment to evaluate the learning process (Brown, 2004); and the use of Nearpod in the reading (Delacruz, 2014; Sanmugam et al., 2019). Student test results from before and after reading instruction made up the final data. The results of these assessments were used to evaluate the teaching-learning process and as both initial and supporting data.

An analyses of the quantitative and qualitative data varied. By utilizing (Burns, 2010) frameworks that assemble the data, code the data, compare the data, generate meanings, and publish the results, the qualitative data, which consisted of interview transcripts and field note data, was examined. To gauge how well the students were learning, the quantitative data were evaluated using the SPSS and EXCEL program.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

An interview with the teacher or instructor was done as part of this preliminary study to identify issues with online learning. The instructor reported that at the beginning of the semester, the students' reading scores were still poor. It showed that individuals had trouble comprehending text. Due to their limited vocabulary, the students are still having trouble understanding the text and identifying the primary concept, supporting details, implicit inferences, correct references, and other textual components. EFL learners in Indonesia are faced with all reading problems, according to studies from the past (Yusuf, & Susiani, 2016; Komariah et al., 2015; Erdiana, Kasim, & Juwita, 2017; Gani; Sahardin et al., 2015; Yusuf & Fauzan, 2016; Agustina, et al. (2022)). Some students occasionally chose not to participate in the learning process at the beginning of the semester. Their lackluster online learning presence contributed to their subpar achievement. The teacher worked harder to discover the best solution to these issues in order to solve them.

The teacher continued to have trouble choosing the right media to teach reading. During online learning, SIMPKB Application are connected with Google Meet and Zoom, YouTube, WhatsApp groups, and Google Forms were all used as media. Even though the teacher assessed their reading using a Google Meet, Zoom, Google Form, shared the resources on a WhatsApp group, and created some videos to teach reading, all of the suggested fixes fell short of expectations. Given the issues found, the researchers' goal at this point was to improve the online reading learning process in order to improve the students' reading comprehension abilities. Understanding the substance of the text is the main goal of reading comprehension, and this active thinking process depends

on the readers' degree of knowledge and comprehension abilities (Sahardin et al., 2015).

1. Planning

At this step, the teacher and researchers talked about how to solve the issue. Due to a pertinent study (Delacruz, 2014) that was conducted using SIMPKB that connected with zoom and google meet to teach reading, it was decided to employ SIMPKB to accomplish the purpose. A modified version of the genre-based approach was adopted by the teacher. Examples of the activities were a vocabulary exercise, group reading comprehension practice, and oral discussion of a procedure text. Students were given texts to read and then engaged in exercises that focused on social functions, text structures, and linguistic aspects as they learned the content.

The challenges that the students encountered when reading included being unable to identify the primary concept, locate the paragraph's supporting facts, draw implicit conclusions, find the appropriate references, and comprehend the material due to their restricted vocabulary. The researchers and the teacher used Virtualclass to address the problems and improve the activities. SIMPKB allows users to create reading-related poll questions, videos, slides, and quizzes (Delacruz, 2014). With the exception of the poll questions, all of the aforementioned components would be used to construct the activities. All of the resources and exercises utilized in SIMPKB's reading learning process were presented on slides. Videos were used in the BKOF and MOT stages to describe procedural text, a text's structure, language features, and a sample of text. The students kept taking tests that focused on text structure. In the JCOT stage, the researchers used matching photos to provide workouts about vocabulary, action verbs, steps in cooking, as well as memory games because the quizzes presented a variety of question types. In the ICOT stage, open-ended and true/false questions were then offered.

2. Action and Observation

A lesson plan was used to guide the action. Since the Genre-Based Approach (GBA) in ELT promises actual benefits for learners by fusing language, subject, and context, the teacher used it to teach reading (Kusumaningrum, 2015). Three meetings were used to apply the stages of the genre-based approach. Beginning with the BKOF, the initial meeting moved on to the MOT. The students were ready to dive into the subject and share experiences during the BKOF stage. They were questioned regarding their preferred foods and cooking methods. The goal of this activity was to get them thinking about the recipe, which was an example of a method text. The information was presented as a video in SIMPKB. The video described procedural texts, including their definition, uses in daily life, linguistic characteristics, textual organization, and sample texts. The MOT stage acquaints the students with the discussed genre (Kusumaningrum, 2015). Students were given a sample of the "How to Make Cake" recipe during the

MOT phase. The text is a model and source of information for social studies function, linguistic traits, and textual organization of procedures. Activities including text structure and linguistic elements were given to the students in order to assess their comprehension. Sharing the zoom or google meet link with the WhatsApp group at the start of each meeting allowed students to participate in all activities and classes. Each students had has their own Virtualclass account.

In the second meeting, JCOT was implemented with several adjustments. With questions that concentrate on the stages of the genre in the JCOT, the instructor helps the students enter the joint construction (Istiqomah, Winimurti, & Prawestri, 2018). Activities in this meeting were facilitated by providing supporting images for each task. Their practice after learning the genre was the main topic of discussion at this conference. Students were asked to answer an open-ended question about what procedure text was to begin the second meeting by thinking back on what they had learned in the first meeting. A vocabulary game was the second task. The students had to match the appropriate action verbs with the photos. The following activity was a memory test, which the students thought was entertaining because they had to discover the same image on the "Making Ice Cendol" steps. The fourth task involved matching the appropriate "Making Pan Cake" steps to the image. Students had to finish the work in a different method by drawing a line from the photos on the left to the steps on the right in order to give them alternate exercises while the procedure text was still being organized.

The teacher took field notes at each session in order to reflect on the reading learning process, identify challenges, and determine what should be changed for the following session. Some of the students had trouble grasping the instruction, as was reported in a prior meeting. As a result, each action now includes a voice note in Indonesian. According to Afriyeni et al. (2013), teachers should act as an educator, a motivator, and a facilitator when teaching reading to ensure that the children receive quality instruction. However, in order to inspire, stimulate, and assist teaching and learning, teachers are required to be innovative. The conversations between students and parents below show how the teacher facilitates the students' problems being solved:

"Assalamu'alaikum Miss," several students and parents chit-chat with me on WA. Sorry, my youngster doesn't understand how to complete the work, and my smartphone won't open it; perhaps the internet data is running low. "Ma'am, I don't get this," said (S1) while sending a screenshot of an activity. "How about this activity, Miss?" asks (S2). (S3): "Miss, this activity confuses me. Should I check off all three of these numbers? (S4).

The aforementioned quotes demonstrated that the children and parents discussed their learning challenges with the teacher. However, it was also discovered that students made an attempt to participate in the learning process. While some students actively participate in learning activities, pay

attention, and complete homework, others do not. Although students had trouble understanding the instructions, it is clear from Appendix 1 that they were anxious to finish the assignment. Thus, they sought advice from the teacher to solve the issue. This study reinforces evidence from earlier observation (e.g. Biggs, 2012) that teachers can address a range of engagement issues in the classroom. Maintaining student engagement is crucial for their continued success in the present and the future, and how teachers interact with students on a daily basis may be affected by this (Quin, 2017). (Nguyen, Cannata, & Miller, 2018; Jang, Kim, & Reeve, 2016; Quin, 2017). Engaging kids while simultaneously teaching a subject and maintaining classroom management is a difficult and complex challenge for teachers (Cents-Boonstra, Lichtwarck-Aschoff, Lara, & Denessen, 2021).

The topic of the most recent meeting was ICOT. Making a Martabak was the new text presented at the start of the session. They were instructed to carefully read the text and mark the appropriate response for each question. In the first activity, obtaining specific information from text was stressed. In the second activity, which had the same function as the first, students responded to three True or False questions after receiving a new text titled "How to Make Personal Curriculum Vitae." Students mastered the skills of locating the text's core concept, supporting details, and purpose in the prior activity using the same text. Since reading comprehension is the objective of standard competence, the exercises from the previous meeting were regarded as formative assessments in this subject. The students worked independently with the text during the ICOT stage, and their performances served as achievement assessments.

The stage of action and observation were combined. The teacher was aware of her responsibilities as a facilitator and guide for the reading learning materials. After class, she gave the kids feedback as well. The course was adaptable for the students to access because to the user-friendly SIMPKB media, which also assisted them in improving their reading learning process. The students were very attentive when they entered the classroom, and when they had questions about the lesson, they tended to ask and talk with the teacher. Because they paid less attention to the instructions for each assignment, the students occasionally experienced trouble using SIMPKB.

3. Reflection

Most of the time, SIMPKB was used to keep students interested in their reading lessons. The majority of them took part in and finished the work in SIMPKB. Throughout the lesson, they demonstrated curiosity. The definition of student engagement is the degree to which students participate in the learning process and feel a connection to their lessons (Axelson & Flick, 2011). Students' emotional reactions to classroom activities, such as the expression of a positive effect, are described as emotional involvement (Van-Uden, Ritzen, & Pieters, 2014). According to Banna et al. (2015), Britt et al. (2015), and Meyer (2014), student engagement is crucial to online learning since it can be seen as a sign of the effort students put in to enhance their

cognition and develop their knowledge, which results in high levels of student success. The statements made by the kids in the following passages also backed up those claims:

- Researcher : How do you feel about the events?
Student 1 : I like the in-class exercise, but occasionally I have connectivity Problems that make it hard for me to finish it.
Student 2 : It was a reasonable miss. The tutorial is very helpful.

Additionally, chat and discussion are included in SIMPKB to help students enjoy the reading learning process. These activities were crucial for grabbing students' interest and they demonstrated that SIMPKB had certain capabilities to help teachers create lesson plans. Therefore, in order to help the teaching and learning process, teachers should be innovative in their use of media. If online instructors want to increase student engagement in their courses, they should be careful while choosing materials and content (Martin & Bolliger, 2018). Additionally, using SIMPKB allows teachers to provide presentations, monitor students' development, and immediately communicate with students about completed assignments. The following are the statements made during the interview's reflection phase:

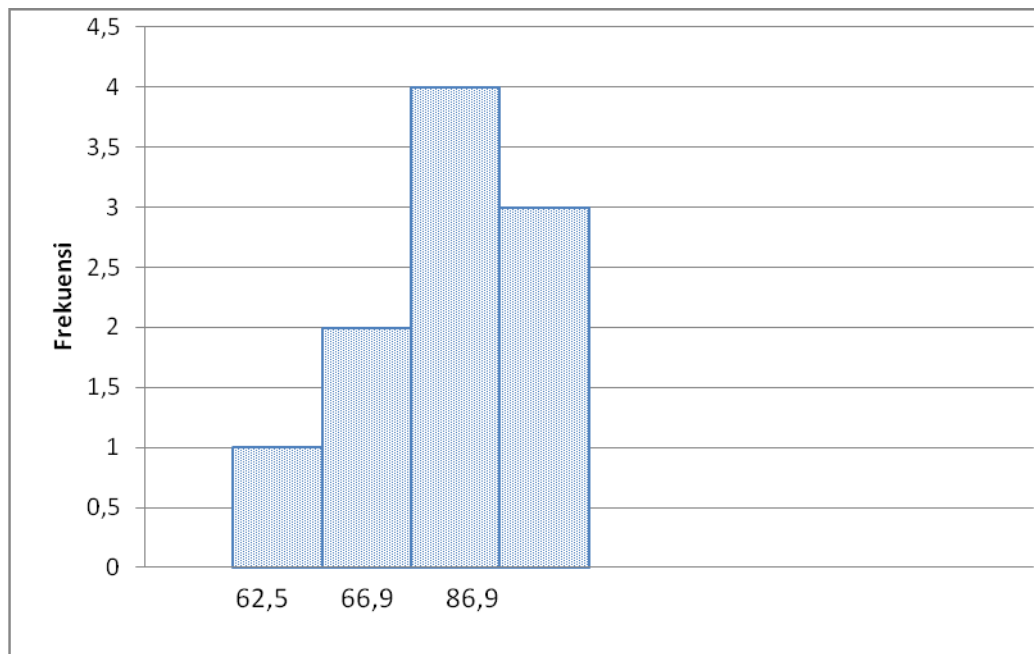
- Researcher : Do you believe the students are enjoying the activities?
Teacher : They take pleasure in the activities. If they have trouble finishing the exercises, they will speak with the teacher. How do you feel about the reading practice, according the researcher?
Teacher : Although there are many areas that need to be improved in the upcoming cycle, I feel happy meeting after meeting.
Researcher : Are there any outstanding issues that require our attention?
Teacher : Due to erratic internet connections, some students occasionally had trouble completing the Virtualclass assignment, and others had trouble following directions. I then had the thought to make the following meeting better.
Researcher : Which section shows some failures and improvement?
Teacher : When pupils struggled to execute tasks successfully because they misunderstood the instructions, it is the section that shows failures. When the students took the reading comprehension test at the most recent meeting, they demonstrated improvement and got good marks.

According to the teacher's assessment of the results of the interview conducted during the reflection phase, the students' performance on the reading comprehension exam increased. It is inferred that the students displayed enthusiasm when they encountered difficulties and sought the teacher's advice. When there were issues, the teacher noted them in the field notes and changed the subsequent session in SIMPKB accordingly. According to Teele (2004), every reader should be able to comprehend what they are reading. While Küçükolu's (2013) mention that research, proficient readers take an active part.

They are familiar with the material and cognizant of the strategies they employ to comprehend what they read. Teachers may find using SIMPKB difficult because they must construct exercises for a presentation that takes a lot of time to prepare. The lesson's structure must also be appropriate for the application. It implies that the curriculum needs to be restructured by the teacher (McClellan & Crowe, 2017). When teachers try to develop a lesson in SIMPKB and deliver it while being aware of all these obstacles, they recognize the dynamism that SIMPKB brings to the lesson. The educator can then modify the teaching materials to suit the needs of the students (Audi & Gouia-Zarrad, 2013).

4. Result of Pre-Test and Post-Test from the Meetings

The students took a pre-test to gauge their level of foundational reading comprehension before the first meeting. Additionally, all students were given a post-test at the conclusion of the meeting to gauge their growth in reading skills after utilizing the SIMPKB program to teach reading using a genre-based approach. The test had ten questions that covered every aspect of reading comprehension. Using SPSS and EXCEL, the quantitative data were examined. The students' performance on the post-test was regarded as the final outcome of the teacher's efforts to teach reading using SIMPKB. The analysis of the pre- and post-test findings demonstrated improvements in the calculated test outcomes. The average reading text score on the post-test was 86.9, compared to the pre-average test's of 66.9. As a result, adopting SIMPKB for English students reading instruction helped the students' reading exam scores.



Graphic 1. Graphic Pre and Post Test

Graphic 1 illustrates the variations in student performance on the reading pre- and post-tests. In comparison to the pre-test, the post-test result was better. This indicates that including SIMPKB into the reading instruction

process can improve students' test results. The test revealed that the pupils could identify the main idea, choose supporting facts, and comprehend the implied understanding the document's meaning and the method text. The results of this study are consistent with Delacruz's (2014) claim that the SIMPKB framework is employed for the teaching of reading since it is interactive and can track students' progress. It shows a considerable improvement in the learning experiences that students have when utilizing the SIMPKB application. This study's findings are analogous to those of Shehata et al. (2020), who found that using SIMPKB promotes student engagement in the classroom and boosts academic performance. As a result, the SIMPKB application features have a good effect on students' ability to understand what they read.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

By utilizing the SIMPKB application, this study enhances the reading learning process. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the study was conducted at a PPG students of English Education Study Program, PPG Study Program of FKIP Universitas Khairun, Indonesia. Plan, action, and reflection were developed and implemented in the teaching and learning process to accomplish the goal of this study. According to recent research, SIMPKB features encourage pupils to participate in educational activities in the classroom. Additionally, teachers and students can more readily complete learning objectives during class time because to the way SIMPKB maintains its contents. Additionally, the SIMPKB approach of organizing learning materials and managing the learning experiences to involve all students in the class boosted the students' reading comprehension abilities.

The results of the study demonstrate that the SIMPKB promotes active learning and allows students to participate in the teaching and learning process in the classroom. It was found that a variety of SIMPKB activities helped students enjoy the reading-related learning process. Additionally, the teacher attested that SIMPKB helped them with their lessons and raised the students' average reading test score from 66.9 to 86.9. The aforementioned findings have applications that teachers can use to implement excellent teaching in learning contexts. We think it could be simpler to plan classroom activities that enhance the teaching and learning process if we are aware of the possibilities of these dynamic learning tools. The teacher's position should be altered from that of information provider to that of facilitator for the students. One of the first attempts to carefully analyze the application of SIMPKB utilizing a genre-based approach in the teaching of reading is this study. The little amount of time available for the activity, however, is a flaw in this research. It is advised to carry out action research on reading instruction utilizing SIMPKB over a longer period of time with a bigger group of students as part of future studies.

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