

## PHONICS READING AS A TOOL IN IMPROVING SPEECH AND LANGUAGE SKILLS IN A HEARING-IMPAIRED CHILD WITH AUDITORY NEUROPATHY: A CASE STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

**Introduction:** This case study explored whether the phonics reading approach can improve the speech and language skills in a hearing-impaired child with auditory neuropathy.

**Methods:** A 5-year-old Malay boy was referred to Pediatric Rehabilitation Clinic, Hospital Rehabilitasi Cheras for aural rehabilitation in November 2014 at the age of 2 years old with a complaint of inconsistent response to call and babbling speech. Hearing assessment was done and was diagnosed with bilateral sensorineural hearing loss (severe to profound with auditory neuropathy on the right ear, mild to severe on the left ear). Speech and language assessment showed he had severe speech and language disorders. An intervention plan consisting of conventional intervention (auditory training and auditory verbal therapy) and additional phonics reading was included, hoping to boost the speech and language skills of the child.

**Results:** After one year of rehabilitation, the patient showed remarkable progress on his listening and communication. His auditory skills had improved from detection to auditory comprehension level. Through phonics reading, from zero vocabulary at the time of assessment to over 100 words to date. He was able to communicate verbally where he was able to produce 3-4 words sentences. Speech production was observed to be 50% intelligible.

**Conclusion:** Additional phonics reading approach together with conventional method of intervention may be helpful to improve speech and language skills of hearing-impaired children with auditory neuropathy.

**Keywords:** Phonics reading, Speech and language, Hearing impairment, Auditory neuropathy, Aural rehabilitation

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