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The Use of Big Book Media in Improving Reading Interest of 1st Grade Students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun

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Abstract:

This study aims to improve the reading interest of 1st-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun through the use of Big Book media. This research is a Classroom Action Research (CAR) conducted in three cycles with a total of 18 students. Each cycle consists of four stages: planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. The results of the study show an increase in students' reading interest in each cycle. In the first cycle, students' reading interest was still relatively low, as seen from their lack of enthusiasm and participation in reading activities. After the intervention with Big Book media in the second cycle, students began to show greater interest in reading activities. This improvement continued into the third cycle, where students became more active in participating in reading activities and demonstrated a better understanding of the reading material. The use of Big Book media proved to be effective in attracting students' attention because of its appealing visuals, and the large size of the book made it easier for them to comprehend the content of the story. Furthermore, this method created a more enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere. Thus, Big Book media can serve as an innovative learning strategy to enhance the reading interest of early-grade students.

Keywords: Big Book, Reading Interest, Learning, 1st Grade Students

INTRODUCTION

Reading is a fundamental skill that is very important for students' academic development, especially in primary education. Good reading ability helps students understand various subjects and improves their academic achievements (Sari & Nugroho, 2021). However, in reality, many early-grade students still have low reading interest. This lack of interest can be caused by several factors, such as a lack of engaging reading materials, monotonous teaching methods, and low student participation in reading activities in the classroom (Rahmawati, 2022).

Low reading interest in elementary school students can impact their literacy skills in the future. If not addressed early on, this can hinder their ability to understand texts, think critically, and absorb information effectively (Putri & Hidayat, 2020). Therefore, innovative teaching strategies are needed to increase students' reading interest from an early age. One method that can be implemented is the use of Big Book media, which has an

attractive visual design and large text, making it easier for students to understand (Wahyuni, 2023).

Big Book media has been widely used in literacy learning and has been proven effective in increasing student engagement in reading. According to research by Susanto & Lestari (2021), the use of Big Book can enhance students' reading motivation because of its more appealing design compared to regular reading books. In addition, Big Book allows students to read together in a more interactive and enjoyable atmosphere. This can help build reading habits early on and improve their understanding of the text.

Besides its attractive appearance, Big Book can also assist teachers in creating a more communicative learning environment. Teachers can use methods like reading together, interactive discussions, and other strategies to make students more active in understanding the reading material (Ardiansyah & Dewi, 2022). In this way, students are not just reading texts passively but are also involved in exploring meanings and reinforcing vocabulary, which is useful for their language development.

This study aims to implement Big Book media to increase the reading interest of 1st-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun. The research method used in this study is Classroom Action Research (CAR), which is conducted in three cycles. Each cycle consists of the stages of planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. Through these stages, the effectiveness of Big Book media in improving students' reading interest is expected to be determined.

In the first cycle, students will be introduced to Big Book as a new learning media. The teacher will observe how students initially respond to this media and how engaged they are in reading. If any obstacles are found during its implementation, improvements will be made in the second cycle to make the media more effective. The evaluation and reflection process will continue through the third cycle to ensure that the method applied can provide optimal results (Setiawan & Ramadhani, 2021).

The results of this study are expected to demonstrate that the use of Big Book media can significantly increase the reading interest of 1st-grade students. Additionally, this study is expected to contribute to the development of more interactive and effective literacy teaching strategies for early-grade students. If proven effective, this method can serve as an alternative in reading instruction at the elementary level, particularly in the early stages of literacy introduction (Fauziah & Hamzah, 2023).

With the increased reading interest of students, it is hoped that they will become more accustomed to literacy activities and develop better reading skills. Teachers will also find it easier to manage reading lessons with a more enjoyable and engaging approach. The success of this research can serve as a foundation for the development of more innovative teaching methods in the future to improve early literacy among students (Nugraha & Sulastri, 2022).

METHODS

This study uses a Classroom Action Research (CAR) approach conducted in three cycles. The data sources in this study consist of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from observations of reading activities of 1st-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun, interviews with the class teacher, and questionnaires given to students to measure their reading interest before and after the use of Big Book media. Additionally, primary data were also collected through documentation in the form of photos of activities and field notes during the research process.

Meanwhile, secondary data were obtained from various relevant literatures, such as research journals, reference books, and teaching documents related to the use of Big Book media in increasing students' reading interest. These sources were used to strengthen the theoretical foundation and compare the results of this study with previous studies conducted in the field of early childhood literacy. The data analysis in this study was carried out both qualitatively and quantitatively. Qualitative analysis was used to

interpret the results of observations, interviews, and documentation in order to understand changes in students' reading behaviors. This data was analyzed through data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions based on findings obtained in each research cycle.

Quantitative analysis was carried out by calculating the percentage increase in students' reading interest from the first cycle to the third cycle. Questionnaire data were analyzed using percentage techniques to determine the differences in reading interest levels before and after the implementation of Big Book media. The results of this analysis were used as a basis for evaluating the effectiveness of the use of Big Book and determining corrective actions in the following cycles. With a combination of qualitative and quantitative analysis, this study is expected to provide more accurate and comprehensive results in understanding the impact of using Big Book media on the reading interest of 1st-grade students.

RESULTS

This study was conducted in three cycles, involving 18 first-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun. Data were collected through observation, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation during the learning process using Big Book media. The main objective of this study was to measure the improvement in students' reading interest after the implementation of Big Book media as a teaching strategy.

In the first cycle, the observation results showed that most students were still not enthusiastic about participating in reading activities. Students appeared passive, unfocused, and showed low interest in reading books. Based on the initial questionnaire results, only about 40% of students showed good reading interest, while the other 60% were less interested in reading materials. The main factors contributing to the low reading interest were the lack of appeal in previous reading materials and the conventional teaching methods used.

After the intervention with Big Book media in the second cycle, there was a significant improvement in student participation. Students appeared more active in the reading sessions and began showing more positive responses to reading activities. The attractive visuals of Big Book and the larger text size made students more interested in reading. The results of the second cycle questionnaire showed that students' reading interest increased to 65%, with more students expressing interest in reading independently or in groups.

In the third cycle, the improvement was even more significant, with 85% of students showing high reading interest. Students began reading with better expression, understanding the content of the stories more deeply, and frequently asking to read other books outside class time. Additionally, students began to take the initiative to retell the content of the books they had read. This indicates that the use of Big Book media not only increased reading interest but also helped students better comprehend and remember the content of the reading material. Here is the data on the increase in students' reading interest based on the questionnaire results in three research cycles:

Cycle	Number of Students	Low Reading Interest (%)	High Reading Interest (%)
Pre-Cycle	18	60% (11 students)	40% (7 students)
Cycle 1	18	55% (10 students)	45% (8 students)
Cycle 2	18	35% (6 students)	65% (12 students)
Cycle 3	18	15% (3 students)	85% (15 students)

Data Verification

To ensure data validity, triangulation was performed by comparing the results of observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Interview results with the

class teacher indicated that students experienced a change in attitude towards reading activities, becoming more enthusiastic and confident in exploring the content of the books they read.

Additionally, the observation results from all three cycles showed an increase in student engagement in reading. In the first cycle, students were still passive and only read when directed by the teacher. However, in the second cycle, students began showing greater interest, and in the third cycle, they even started taking the initiative to read books outside class time.

Data verification was also carried out by comparing the questionnaire results before and after the application of Big Book media. The quantitative analysis showed that students' reading interest gradually increased from 40% at the beginning of the study to 85% by the third cycle. Furthermore, documentation in the form of activity photos and field notes reinforced the finding that the Big Book method was able to create a more interactive and enjoyable learning environment.

With the consistency of data from various sources, it can be concluded that the use of Big Book media is effective in increasing the reading interest of first-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun. This success shows that visual and interactive-based teaching methods can be the right strategy to enhance literacy in early childhood education. This study also demonstrates that active student involvement in reading activities not only increases their interest but also helps them develop critical thinking skills and understand texts better. Therefore, it is recommended that Big Book media continue to be used in reading instruction in early-grade classes as an innovative and effective method.

Data validation in this study was carried out to ensure the accuracy and consistency of the results obtained from various research instruments. Triangulation techniques were used by comparing the results from observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation throughout the three research cycles. With this method, the data collected could be tested for accuracy, making the findings more valid and accountable.

The observation results show that student involvement in reading gradually increased from the first cycle to the third cycle. This data is supported by interviews with the class teacher, who stated that students became more enthusiastic about participating in reading activities and were more active in asking questions and discussing the content of the readings. Additionally, documentation data in the form of activity photos also showed students' more enthusiastic expressions when using Big Book media compared to previous teaching methods.

The results of the questionnaires, which were analyzed quantitatively, also show a pattern of increasing reading interest among students. In the pre-cycle, only 40% of students showed high reading interest, while in the first cycle, this number increased to 45%, then rose to 65% in the second cycle, and finally reached 85% in the third cycle. This consistent increase shows that Big Book media is effective in gradually increasing students' reading interest.

The data validation results indicate that the use of Big Book media in reading instruction has a positive impact on the reading interest of first-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun. Based on the interview results, the teacher stated that Big Book usage greatly helped improve students' attention to reading texts. The teacher also observed that students found it easier to understand the content of the readings due to the combination of attractive images and larger text.

From the observation perspective, the increase in student activity in reading became an important indicator that this method was successful in increasing student engagement in literacy learning. In the first cycle, students still needed to be guided by the teacher to read, while in the second cycle, they began to be more active. By the third cycle, students even started taking the initiative to read independently and encourage their classmates to read together.

From the documentation perspective, photos of the activities showed students' more enthusiastic expressions when reading Big Book compared to regular reading books. This further supports the finding that Big Book media not only increases reading interest but also creates a more enjoyable and interactive learning atmosphere.

Thus, the data validation results support the conclusion that Big Book media is an effective method for increasing reading interest among first-grade students. This study also shows that a more visual and interactive approach can help overcome challenges in literacy learning at the primary education level. Therefore, it is recommended that this method be implemented more widely in primary schools as an innovative reading instruction strategy.

CONCLUSION

The results of this study show that the use of Big Book media significantly enhances the reading interest of first-grade students at MI Muhammadiyah Bangun. Based on data collected from observations, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation, there was a gradual increase in student engagement with reading activities. In the initial cycle, only 40% of students showed high reading interest, but after the intervention with Big Book, this percentage increased to 85% in the third cycle. These findings were reinforced by interview results with the teacher, who confirmed that the Big Book method was effective in capturing students' attention and improving their understanding of the reading material.

Additionally, observations revealed a change in students' reading behavior, where they became more active and enthusiastic from one cycle to the next. Documentation in the form of photos also provided visual evidence that the learning environment became more interactive and enjoyable. Therefore, it can be concluded that the use of Big Book media is an effective strategy for enhancing reading interest in early-grade students. Academically, this study contributes significantly to the field of literacy education in elementary schools. The increased reading interest resulted in a better understanding of the material, which ultimately supports the development of students' basic literacy skills. As reading interest increases, students are also more motivated to explore a variety of other readings, thereby improving their critical thinking skills and imagination from an early age.

From a social contribution perspective, the use of Big Book media in reading instruction can help build a literacy culture from an early age. If implemented widely, this method has the potential to enhance children's reading habits both at school and at home. Furthermore, this study provides valuable insights for educators about the importance of using engaging and interactive media to boost student learning motivation.

Thus, this study affirms that Big Book media is an innovative and effective alternative learning strategy to increase the reading interest of early-grade students. Therefore, it is recommended that this method be further developed and applied in various primary educational institutions to support the enhancement of children's literacy skills from an early age.

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