

# Picture Book Series as A Medium to Foster Reading Interest of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Children

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## Abstract

Indonesian people's reading interest, especially for MI/SD children, is still relatively low because they prefer playing online games, watching television, etc. This factor causes their reading ability is still lacking. In addition, there are reading books (both story books and textbooks) in school institutions which are still monotonous with colorless pictures so that children get bored easily and are not interested in reading them. Based on the phenomenon above, the teacher's interest in reading in MI/SD children must be increased because "books are a storehouse of knowledge and reading can open the horizons of the world". The use of learning media to foster children's reading interest is by using a series of picture books. This series of picture books is more developed if the teacher dares to be creative by making colorful pictures accompanied by simple sentences that can attract children's interest in reading them. This series of picture books is effectively used in the learning of MI/SD children because they contain games as well as education. In a series of picture books there are several learning activities including observing, telling, reading and sorting the pictures so that they become a complete story. Furthermore, the teacher can add/collaborate on strategies or methods that can support the use of picture book series to be more innovative in each lesson.

**Keywords:** *reading interest, book media, picture series.*

## 1. Introduction

Education is a primary need to ensure the survival of the nation and state. Education is a means to improve and develop human resources to realize common goals (Wahid & Darajat, 2022). The pace of development of Indonesian society is still relatively slow, especially in the quality, relevance and efficiency of education (Sanusi, 2023).

In its development, the school environment is a place that the majority are trusted by the community as a means to provide good educational services for their children (Sagala & Perangin-angin, 2023). This statement is in accordance with what was stated by Mudyahardjo that "Education is a conscious effort made by the family, community and government, through guidance activities, teaching and/or training that takes place in school or outside school throughout life" (Rengganis et al., 2022). Education has a very important role because it contributes to people's lives so that each individual can optimize their abilities according to their talents and interests.

The main task of students is to learn, and in this case learning at school is prioritized by parents. This condition demands the responsibility of school administrators to be able to provide adequate facilities and infrastructure. Frequent direct contact between teachers and students causes the greatest responsibility to be in

the hands of the teacher so that it is hoped that the child can develop and optimize their potential (Muashomah, 2022).

Development of potential that can be applied to children, one of which is by reading. This is in accordance with the National Education System Law No. 20 of 2003 article 4 paragraph 5 stated "Education is carried out by developing a culture of reading, writing, and arithmetic for all citizens of the community." However, in accordance with the times, the culture of reading in Indonesian society is still low, especially among children ranging from kindergarten to elementary school (Hamim et al., 2022). In reading skills, children often experience difficulties because of the significant difference between their academic abilities and the level of intelligence of children in mastering reading according to their age development (Novianti Retno Utami, 2023). Reading difficulties in children are very influential on the learning process in each subject, especially Indonesian. In addition, reading difficulties can also affect the emotional and psychological aspects of children so that they will affect the next stage of development. Thus, intensive coaching and guidance is needed for children who have difficulty in reading skills.

The reality that happens to people is that they are more enthusiastic about watching television than reading. This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of attention of parents in the habit of reading to their children. The more busy life that parents have makes children farther away from books, because there is no time to guide and teach children in reading, for example through series of picture books. Ironically, when children enter MI / SD, the curriculum raw material makes the teacher's space for creativity more limited because it is only glued to one mandatory handbook.

Based on this explanation, efforts are needed to foster reading interest in MI / SD children. The process of fostering interest in reading in MI / SD children will be more effective if parents and teachers as educators in schools together play an active role in guiding their children. Parents must have a high awareness that the love of reading is the most important goal for their children. Parents' efforts are more optimal if supported by various parties, one of which is from the teacher at school. With the provision of interesting books in the form of picture books (color), the series can foster children's interest in reading them.

## 2. Research Methods

In carrying out this research, researchers use *field research* using qualitative descriptive methods. A quality research method is something based on the philosophy of *postpositivism*. (Sugiyono, 2018) Qualitative research methods are also used to examine an object that is natural. The research will be conducted at MI Ma'arif NU Batuanten. The sources of information in this study are classroom teachers and low-grade learners. Data collection will be carried out using three methods, namely, observation will be carried out by researchers directly during classroom learning, interviews with those concerned, and documentation that can be done directly in madrasahs or through intermediary media, namely WhatsApp. Data analysis is carried out using three stages, the first is data reduction related to observations, interviews, and supporting documentation. The second is the presentation of data, after the researcher sorts out the necessary documents, the researcher presents the data. The third is to draw conclusions, after the data is presented, the researcher analyzes the conclusions based on the data that has been presented. Test the validity of the researchers' data by triangulating techniques, sources, and time.

## 3. Results and Discussion

### 3.1. Reading Opens the Horizons of the World

Reading activities are closely related to writing. Writing can express ideas, thoughts expressed in written language while reading is a way to interpret what is in the writer's mind. According to Tarigan, reading is a process carried out by readers to obtain information and messages that have been conveyed by the author through written language media (Lubis et al., 2023). Reading can also be interpreted as the process of matching letters and being able to recite symbols and write them. Ruddell in Morrow (1993) argues that reading is an activity in the use of language in describing and explaining writing and symbols and being able to understand them (Fauzi, 2022). Katni also explained that reading is a physical and mental activity to find meaning and writing (Murniviyanti et al., 2022).

Tarigan also explained that the understanding of reading in terms of *linguistic* is a process of giving back and decoding (*a recording and decoding process*). While speaking and writing activities use *encoding*. An aspect of *decoding* is connecting words in *written language* with oral *language* meaning which includes converting writing into meaningful sounds (Muhamad, 2022). So, reading can be interpreted as an activity that not only recites letters or words, but involves many things including physical, cognitive, psycholinguistic and metacognitive activities.

Reading is also categorized as the activity of the process of translating a sign and symbol in accordance with its meaning, recognition of the words contained in it, literal understanding, interpretation and understanding of

the meaning of the reading so that it can be associated with the reader's experience with the text read. With reading activities, the reader has indirectly collected words by relating the purpose and direction of the reading so that the reader can conclude according to the ideas he has. Reading is also called the key to science. Reading is an effort made by humans with the aim of eradicating ignorance.

A person's skills will be seen and formed by reading. This reading factor dominates in creating a prosperous life based on the advances in science and technology that exist today. Get used to reading in everyday life, as if we can open the horizons of the world. By reading can get a variety of information that is easily absorbed, a person can travel around various countries without having to struggle and can turn the reader into charming and smooth speech. In other words, reading activities can open insights, add and improve knowledge, skills and activities so that talents and interests are developed optimally.

### **3.2. *Fostering Interest in Reading in MI/SD Children***

Reading is an activity to obtain information in a serious way in order to capture the meaning of what he reads. This seriousness will be created if you have an interest in reading. Interest in reading has a relationship with education and the level of intelligence and also the environment. Reading activities will be realized through several stages including the stages of learning, practicing continuously, and experiencing directly. Reading can be developed into a habit. In reading there are two important aspects that must be considered, namely interest and reading skills. Both aspects are related to each other. If there is no interest in reading, then the habituation of reading skills to be built will not develop properly. Conversely, if you have an interest in reading, reading habits will develop and reading skills will increase. In Siregar's opinion, reading interest is a desire or tendency to increase passion for reading (Mega & Haryadi, 2022).

Darmono also stated that interest in reading is a person's tendency to encourage him to do something by reading (Alifah et al., 2023). This interest in reading starts from oneself so to grow it requires personal awareness. The country is said to be developed if the interest in reading the people is high, therefore the position of this reading interest is very important for the progress of a nation. Cultivating an interest in reading in MI/SD is not easy, but it requires a process and must be pursued through cooperation between teachers and students. Teachers as the main facilitators must be able to innovate by packaging learning activities well so that the goal of increasing students' reading interest is achieved. The learning process is directed at students to be active in obtaining information independently.

There are several ways to foster interest in reading in MI / SD, including: (a) habituation of literacy every morning, (b) rapid discovery of information by students on assignments given by the teacher, (c) the availability of an attractive reading corner with a strategic location in one of the rooms such as a mini library, (d) student visits in each class to the library gradually, (e) making literacy trees as a medium for teacher innovation, (f) making literacy books to monitor how many students do reading activities, (g) rewarding students who are diligent in reading, (h) designing libraries as comfortable as possible so that they feel at home and feel like home, (i) have an adequate collection of library books and contain about the child's world.

Factors that need to be considered so that the implementation of learning is successful in accordance with the target, namely the existence of programs, situations and learning facilities and infrastructure. Libraries also have an important role in fostering children's interest in reading because they can improve children's activities and quality in the teaching and learning process at school. The pattern in fostering interest in reading can be implemented by activating students to the library by utilizing various existing reading resources as the main and supporting sources. In addition, teachers can try to be creative by making their own series of picture books or can even collaborate with students to make series picture books according to the theme to be studied.

### **3.3. *Series Picture Book Media as a Means of Fostering MI/SD Children's Interest in Reading***

The success of the learning process applied by the teacher depends on the learning methods and media. Learning media is a means that can be used by teachers to help understand students with the material they teach, one of which is with the media of series picture books.

Choosing the right media to achieve certain learning goals is not an easy thing. Teachers must still determine the media that is considered the most appropriate and appropriate to be used in learning by knowing the type and use of the media they make. As for testing learning media should take place continuously, before, during, and after its use. Children's world is not spared from their penchant for reading stories. Story is a series of events conveyed in both fiction and non-fiction. Stories are also referred to as literary works that are often taught in an integrated manner in Indonesian subjects.

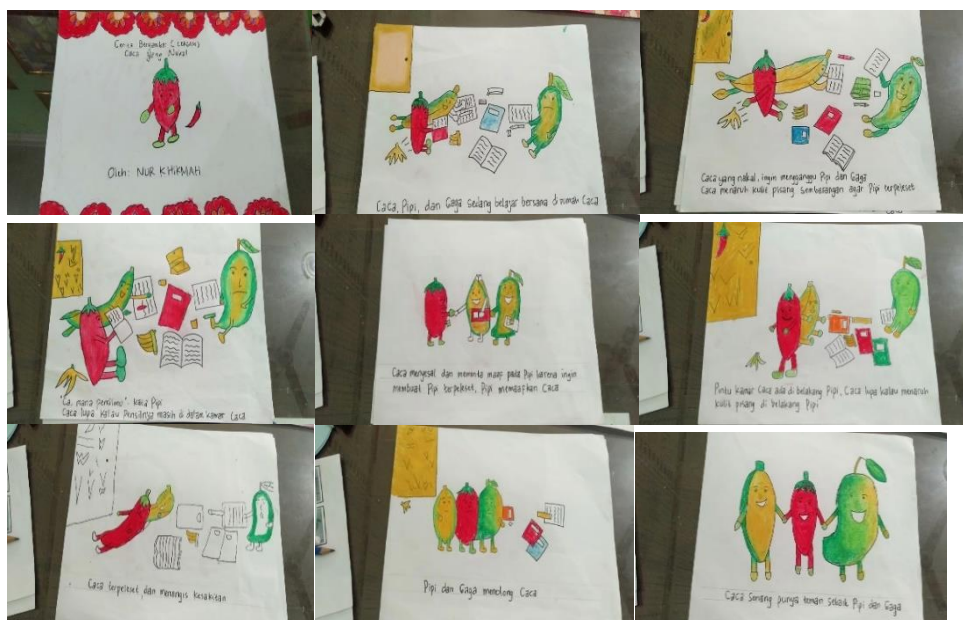
Indonesian people, especially children, really like reading in the form of stories rather than non-stories. Stories can motivate as well as increase vocabulary so that children can increase their potential by appreciating literary works. Literary works in the form of stories can help children in various aspects including cognitive, language, moral and social aspects. The learning process of story appreciation applied to MI / SD students aged 6

to 12 years must be interesting and innovative. You do this by giving concrete objects to students so that they can understand the text of the story being taught.

Piaget stated that children aged 7-10 years are in the concrete operational stage, where the student's way of thinking is still based on the help of objects (objects) or events that he directly sees and experiences. So the role of picture books can help students to concretize the learning of story appreciation. Picture books are books that contain stories in text form equipped with illustrations in the form of interesting images and can make readers interested. In low-grade elementary / MI learning, the role of images is very important to help educators (teachers) in explaining the material to be delivered so as to motivate them to learn.

With the existence of picture books, it has indirectly lined up between stories and pictures. The story and pictures in the picture book must be made interesting. In its implementation, picture books are not only books that are already available directly at school institutions, but teachers can also innovate them by making removable series of picture books (randomized images) so that they can further explore the potential of children in sorting and telling stories about the pictures they have compiled.

This series of picture books is a medium that can be presented in the form of text and illustrations or images that are in accordance with the child's world. For low-grade MI/elementary school children, attractive images have a very important role in fostering students' interest in reading and writing. Here is a series of picture books made by teachers that can foster early reading interest in low-grade students:



The procedure for using the series picture book is that the series images are packaged in book form and if used in the learning process, the series images in the book It can be issued as needed and the child is asked to tell pictures, read writing (simple sentences ) then sort them so that they become a complete story. The advantages of using a series of picture books made by teachers independently can adjust according to the theme to be taught to students, in the form of a book, after students use series image media, they can return / tidy up again on the book packaging as follows:



Judging from its use, series picture books can change the *mindset* of children, from those who do not like to read to be interested in teacher creativity books. With a series of picture books, it can foster interest in reading and reduce children's boredom in reading which has been using conventional methods. In this case, a teacher must be

creative and able to innovate series image media and be able to combine it with other learning methods, strategies to be more effective.

#### 4. Conclusion

Reading activities are closely related to writing. Writing can express ideas, thoughts expressed in written language while reading is a way to interpret what is in the mind of the writer. Reading is an activity to obtain information in a serious way in order to capture the meaning of what he reads. This seriousness will be created if you have an interest in reading. Interest in reading has a relationship with education and the level of intelligence and also the environment. Reading activities will be realized through several stages including the stages of learning, practicing continuously, and experiencing directly.

There are several ways to foster interest in reading in MI / SD, including: (a) habituation of literacy every morning, (b) rapid discovery of information by students on assignments given by the teacher, (c) the availability of an attractive reading corner with a strategic location in one of the rooms such as a mini library, (d) student visits in each class to the library gradually, (e) making literacy trees as a medium for teacher innovation, (f) making literacy books to monitor how many students do reading activities, (g) rewarding students who are diligent in reading, (h) designing libraries as comfortable as possible so that they feel at home and feel like home, (i) have an adequate collection of library books and contain about the child's world.

The success of the learning process applied by the teacher depends on the learning methods and media. Learning media is a means that can be used by teachers to help understand students with the material they teach, one of which is with the media of series picture books. This series of picture books is a medium that can be presented in the form of text and illustrations or images that are in accordance with the child's world. For low-grade MI/elementary school children, attractive images have a very important role in fostering students' interest in reading and writing.

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