

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of The Study

Reading is an activity that nearly all individuals engage in. With reading, humans can develop reading skills, which are an ability and a technique used to enable effective understanding and interpretation of written texts. A person who reads has their own motivation, such as to understand something in learning, getting information, entertainment, and even as a religious practice (Pang et al., 2003). According to Dechant, reading serves as a key factor for success in school, the development of extracurricular interests, the enjoyment of free time, and the ability to adapt socially. It implies that reading is essential to our lives since it serves as a basis for learning everything about our social lives.

Likewise in the world of Language, reading constitutes a fundamental element. In a language class, reading serves not only as a way to enhance and broaden language knowledge but also as a means to develop ideas and gain insight into the culture of the language being learned (Patel, & Jain., 2008). Through reading, Students Language looks at how grammar, vocabulary and sentence structure in the language they learn so that they can improve their linguistics skills. And also reading can help find stories, traditions, values, and perspectives that exist in language so that it can foster awareness to appreciate and learn language.

Thus, it may be inferred that reading is essential for development students' language skills.

Although reading holds a significant place in human life for language learners, it turns out that there are still many countries that have a low reading level, one of which is Indonesia. Indonesia has the fourth largest population based on data from the World Population Review in 2024. According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), Indonesia is positioned 69th out of 80 countries in terms of literacy, reflecting the relatively low reading proficiency of its population, despite being the fourth most populous nation. There are so many factors that make this happen. The fast growth of technology has become one of the main factors affecting the low literacy rates in Indonesia. With today's technology, smartphones are developing so rapidly that the Indonesian population spends more than six hours with their smartphones. Based on the State of Mobile 2024 report from Data.ai, the average Indonesian spends 6.05 hours with a smartphone per day. With this data, it can be seen that Indonesia is addicted to smartphones. Using smartphones excessively can cause various problems, such as lack of sleep, infrequent socialization, lack of study time, and mental health problems (Clarisa Aprilia, 2024). It can be concluded that it has a lot of problems to go on.

Although many negative things can be caused, the technology has a positive impact. Actually, with the development of technology, we as users of this technology should be able to

use it well. By doing so, we can benefit greatly. For example, we can use various features to access and learn from a wealth of information. To get information we can use 'large technological system', is that Internet (Schroeder, 2018). From it could get many information from the world. The network provided access to get information from all fields. From the fields of economy, politics, social, culture, to education. So that the internet cannot escape all activities carried out by humans every day and is increasingly developing according to the necessary needs (Aksenta et al., 2023). Consequently, the Internet can be regarded as one of the most influential technologies in contemporary human existence.

Gadgets and the internet represent tangible outcomes of advancements in the domain of Information and Communication Technology, which are currently being experienced by modern society (Herdianto & Syahidin, 2020). The concept "gadget" originates from English, is defined as a compact technological device designed to perform specific functions (Julianingsih et al., 2021). A gadget can be defined as a sophisticated device that has a variety of applications. The app is then used as a source of information, a source of social networking, hobbies, creativity, and more. Survey results reported by the Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS) Indonesia show that 67.88% of Indonesians use smartphones. This means that more than half of Indonesia's population already uses smartphones, from adults to children. And children use gadgets more to access entertainment media

(Farhani et al., 2022). If not used wisely, it will cause the negative things that have been explained earlier. For this reason, there are various things that can be done to get positive things from the use of gadgets or smartphones. Such as looking for jobs, places to sell, and to become a source of learning for students.

In the world of education, there are various kinds that can be used with the development of gadgets and the internet. Children can use various applications or websites to learn various things and can even access digital books. One of the online resources that can be used to provide students with reading material is the Let's Read website. Let's Read is an educational platform that aims to encourage children to start reading. Many resources that help children learn to read include teaching materials, activities, and children's books that can be downloaded and printed for free. The main goal of the website is to make reading easy and fun for children, especially for children who are in communities that lack access to reading materials (Farhani et al., 2022). The website frequently offers a wide range of books in several languages, including English, which helps to meet a range of linguistic needs. The Let's Read website is an educational digital tool designed to support reading development by providing a variety of interactive resources, such as e-books and comprehension exercises. This platform is designed to foster student engagement and develop their reading abilities by providing interactive and easily accessible content.

The purpose of the Let's Read website aligns with one of the major challenges in education today, namely, a low level of reading interest. This can also be evident in Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila Bengkulu in the seventh grade, most of the students have no interest in reading. At MTs Pancasila Bengkulu City, where the researcher interned, found a problem when teaching that they were lazy to read. There are also not many books that students can access. Most of what is available in the library is material books only. If there is, the book does not make students interested in reading it. The main challenge students encounter is their limited mastery of vocabulary, so to be able to understand reading is difficult. Especially for language learners, it is very important to build a meaningful understanding of language (Hestiana & Anita, 2022). By lacking vocabulary, they are lazy to read, let alone to be able to read comprehensively. Findings from an interview with the English teacher at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila revealed that only a small number of students are able to comprehend English texts well, while the majority struggle with reading due to their limited vocabulary.

The Let's Read website has the potential to enhance the teaching and learning of reading, as it incorporates images that encourage students' motivation to read, provides texts at varying reading levels, and offers vocabulary that aligns with students' reading abilities. Consequently, conducting experimental research entitled "The Effect of The Let's Read Website Toward

Students' Reading Ability of Class VIII Students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila, Bengkulu".

B. Identification of The Problem

Based on the problem background described above, the following research problem has been identified:

1. The vocabulary used in reading texts presents challenges for the students.
2. The students often struggled to grasp the content of the texts they read.
3. The reading materials used by the teachers are not engaging enough for effective reading instruction. The school don't have interesting reading materials in the library.

C. Limitation of The Problem

The study focuses solely on examining the impact of the Let's Read website on the reading skills of eighth-grade students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila, Bengkulu, using fairy tales from the Let's Read Asia category as reading materials, selected according to the appropriate difficulty level

D. Research Question

Is there any significant effect use of 'Let's Read' website toward students reading ability of grade VIII students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila, Bengkulu?

E. Research Objective

Grounded in the background and research question, the aim of this research is to find out how using the 'Let's Read'

website affects the reading ability of grade VIII students at Madrasah Tsanawiyah Pancasila, Bengkulu.

F. Signification of The Study

The objectives of this study are formulated to provide contributions in the following aspects:

1. Theoretical

This study aims to furnish insights and understanding with respect to the impact of Let's Read Asia on students' proficiency in reading narrative texts.

2. Practical

- a. For the teachers, it aims to provide information to English educators about teaching reading through the use of Let's Read Asia.
- b. For the students, this research serves as a valuable source of information about the impact of using Let's Read Asia on their ability to read narrative texts.
- c. For other scholars, this study will serve as a resource for additional pertinent research utilizing Let's Read Asia.

G. Definition of The Key Terms

1. Let's Read Website

An online library is called Let's Read, developed with the aim of building a world where inquisitive and educated readers will create a thriving society. This library that offers a wide selection of books, ranging from regional languages to international languages such as English. It presents diverse stories from various Asian countries, supported by 18 Asia

Foundation offices across the region and strengthened through close collaboration with local communities. The available books also have high-quality pictures so that they can make children excited to read them. This website also has reading levels that can be adjusted to the child's ability, from level 1 to 5. Another noteworthy aspect is that Let's Read is accessible not only via its official website but can also be downloaded as an application through the App Store and Google Play.

2. Reading Ability

Reading ability is a person's ability to find information from the writing they read (Khadijah et al., 2022). Reading ability is a skill to understand, interpret, and analyze texts effectively. This ability allows a person to be able to decode words, understand their meaning, and gain knowledge. Comprehension will greatly petrify a person in understanding the reading word for word (Albete Barredo et al., 2022). So, comprehension in reading is an important thing that is the key for someone to know the meaning and intention of the writing that is read.