Morning Story's Habit: The Impact of Children's Interest in Reading

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Abstract Low interest in reading is a big challenge in Indonesia. The love of books needs to be fostered in early childhood with consistent and fun morning literacy habituation. This study aims to describe the process and impact of "Morning Story" morning habituation activities on children's interest in reading. This qualitative research method is presented with a descriptive approach. The informants of this research are teachers who teach children aged 5-6 years at Haniful Fikri IT Kindergarten, Paya Tampah Village, Aceh Tamiang. Researchers collected data through observation techniques. Data were analyzed through three stages, namely data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. The results of this study indicate that the habituation of "Morning Story" has an impact on fostering interest in reading in children. The habituation of "Morning Story" is supported by the school's KOSP (standard operational curriculum procedure), the consistency of teachers implementing "Morning Story" with fun methods, equipped with interesting animated books and props. As well as motivation to read by providing a library, reading corner, and book borrowing program in the library. The effectiveness of "Morning Story" habituation to increase children's interest in reading can be further researched.

Keywords: Reading interest, Morning Story, habituation, Early Childhood

Introduction

In Indonesia, reading interest among children is still a big challenge. Based on data from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2022, Indonesia's rank for literacy is 68th. Indonesia's literacy score in PISA 2022 is 371 (Yuda & Rosmilawati, 2024). This low ranking indicates that the quality of reading in Indonesia is far from adequate. This issue is further exacerbated by the findings of The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 2016, which noted that Indonesia is ranked second from the bottom of the world in terms of reading interest. The astonishing figure of only 0.001% indicates that the reading interest of Indonesian people is very low and requires serious attention from all parties (Reynaldi & Halim, 2022).

This low interest in reading is also reflected in local data. In Aceh Province, only 9.4% of residents in Banda Aceh and Aceh Besar visit Pustaka Wilayah, a literacy center that should be an important place to foster a love of books. In addition, based on data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2022, the reading interest level of Indonesians in general only reached 59.52, with an average reading duration of 4-5 hours per week. This shows that despite efforts to improve literacy, the results are still far from expectations.

The biggest challenge in increasing interest in reading in Indonesia, especially among children, is the influence of technology and digital media. Uncontrolled use of gadgets and digital media can have a negative impact on the development of children's

interest in reading. Many children are more interested in digital entertainment such as games or videos compared to book reading activities. Technology, which is supposed to be a learning tool, is often a distraction for children from the more traditional and rewarding activity of reading. This can be dangerous if not addressed wisely, as addiction to digital entertainment can exacerbate low interest in reading and in turn, worsen children's literacy skills in the future. These adverse influences could deprive children of the opportunity to develop critical and analytical thinking skills that are crucial in their later lives.

To address this issue, various educational institutions in Indonesia have begun to implement learning methods that can support children's interest in reading from an early age. One example is the "Morning Story" program implemented at TKIT Haniful Fikri. The program involves morning greeting activities, where teachers tell stories through the medium of storybooks and educational props (APE) to children aged 5-6 years (Haryanti & Dindin, 2020). This activity is designed to introduce children to the world of literacy, so that they get used to reading and listening to stories as part of their daily routine (Fibri & Santoso, 2019). The main goal is to foster an interest in reading in children from an early age and reduce their dependence on gadgets that are not useful (Kurniasih, 2019).

Literacy is a basic skill that is very important in a child's educational development. The ability to read is not just to understand text, but also to open access to wider information and knowledge (Ferianti & Irna, 2020). At the early age stage, children begin to form learning habits that will affect their cognitive and social development in the future. Therefore, providing literacy habituation in early childhood is a fundamental step to build their ability to think critically and solve problems. Good literacy will help children understand the world around them (Farini & Rohita, 2023).

Literacy habituation in early childhood is very important because at this age, children are in a stage of development that is very sensitive to learning stimuli (Taib et al., 2022). According to Vygotsky (1978), children's learning process is strongly influenced by social interaction and the surrounding environment. By introducing children to interesting stories, we not only train their language skills, but also enrich their experience in understanding the world through imagination and creativity (Fitriani & Maemonah, 2022). This story-based approach is also in line with Bruner's (1996) view, which suggests that through stories, children learn to organize information and build their knowledge in a fun and immersive way (Juliharti et al., 2023).

Reading interest and literacy in children has become an important topic in education research. Various studies show that storytelling habituation programs can have an influence on increasing children's interest in reading, teacher innovation by using storytelling methods, visual picture book media and direct interaction with children (Fibri & Santoso, 2019). Routine storytelling programs can increase children's interest in books and reading activities (Widiastuti et al., 2023). Strategies in creating a reading-friendly physical environment with reading corners in classrooms and libraries in the school environment to strive for a social and affective environment as a model of literacy communication and interaction.

This study aims to describe and analyze the impact of morning habituation activities in the form of "Morning Story" on children's interest in reading aged 5-6 years at TKIT Haniful Fikri. This research is expected to provide a more in-depth picture of how this program is implemented, as well as its impact on the development of children's interest in reading. Using a qualitative approach, this study also aims to describe the process of increasing children's interest in reading aged 5-6 years at TKIT Haniful Fikri through the implementation of the "Moning Story" program.

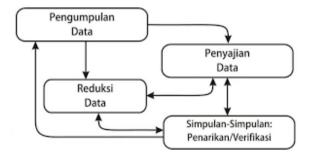
Methods

Research uses a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. This research is field research. Conducted to determine the effect of "Morning Story" to increase reading interest in children aged 5-6 years. The subjects in this study were teachers who taught BI and BII kindergarten classes at TKIT Haniful Fikri, Aceh Tamiang. Researchers collected data from direct observation, interviews and documentation (Juliharti et al., 2023).

Tabel 1. Observation sheet on the story morning habituation stage.

NO	Aspect	Indicators
1.	Implementation of story morning habituation routine by teachers - Frequency of reading, continuous activities on reading habituation Students' attention in reading and listening during reading activities.	 Frequency of reading, continuous activities on reading habituation Students' attention in reading and listening during reading activities.
2.	2. The impact of story morning on children's interest in reading	 Enjoyment of reading, happy and enthusiastic expressions during reading activities Children's interest in reading, love to read in their spare time.

The results of observations are in the form of field notes about the scenario and the effect of Morning Story on children's interest in reading. Observation data collected is data reduction, data presentation, and verification to draw conclusions. At the data reduction stage, the researcher focuses on the indicators set, at the data presentation stage, the findings will be presented systematically and easily understood and at the verification stage examines continuously during the research process.



Picture 1. Showing Style in Journal Template in KOSP TK IT Haniful Fikri

Research Results and Discussion

The results of the analysis of two main aspects in fostering children's interest in reading, namely the implementation of the Morning Story habituation routine by the teacher and its impact on children's interest in reading. Cultivating interest in reading in children needs to start from an early age in a fun way. The first step is to foster a sense of enjoyment of books, such as listening to stories and re-expressing stories that have been heard. Learning to read by directly spelling monotonously, can actually reduce their interest in reading and will have difficulty accepting it (Wulandari & Puspitasari, 2023). This is in line with the phrase that is often found, namely "many humans can read, but do not understand what they read", but not just good at reading but can understand what is

read (Minat et al., 2024). Therefore, do not rush to demand that children only be good at reading but grow children's interest and pleasure in reading (Darmawati, 2020).

Schools have an important role in providing facilities and infrastructure that support literacy activities, such as libraries, classroom reading corners and interesting books. However, these facilities will not have the maximum impact without consistent literacy habituation (Dewantara Hasibuan & Siti Quratul Ain, 2024). Teachers play a very big role in fostering interest in reading in children. One of the efforts made is to use fun methods and make reading a habituation program that is carried out every day, namely the Morning Story activity.

At Haniful Fikri IT Kindergarten, the habituation of Morning Story is used as a KOSP or standard operational curriculum procedure in daily learning activities. Every morning, teachers consistently implement Story Morning, which has proven successful in creating reading habits in children. Children get used to reading activities that are carried out regularly, so that reading becomes their routine. Consistency in this activity has a positive effect on increasing their attention and engagement during the Morning Story.

Berikut adalah budaya Taman Kanak-kanak yang dilaksanakan di TK IT Haniful Fikri

1. Kegiatan Harian

- a. Penyambutan peserta didik
- b. Pembiasaan Story Morning
- C. Pembiasaan Kaliamat Tayvibah
- d. Pembiasaan Wudhu di pagi hari
- e. Shalat Dhuha bersama
- f. Merajahh dan menambah hafalan ayat-ayat pendek dan hadis
- g. Mengaji Iqra dan setoran Hafalan secara Talaqqi
- h. Gerakan bersih lingkungan.

Picture 2: Daily Activities in KOSP Haniful Fikri IT Kindergarten

The impact of the Morning Story habit can be seen in the children's positive expressions, such as smiling, laughing, and telling stories about what they have heard. Children showed greater interest in books, both to read independently in their free time at school and at home. They felt encouraged to explore more books, interact with the pictures in the books, and began to familiarize themselves with reading activities outside the classroom (Faizah & Imamah, 2023).

Thus, the Story Morning habit consistently practiced by teachers not only fosters children's interest in reading but also forms positive reading habits. This shows that teachers have a key role in creating a fun environment that supports children's literacy development. When children feel happy and interested in reading activities, they will build reading habits that will have a positive impact on children's development. Children will feel their day is incomplete without reading.

Story Morning Habituation to Cultivate Early Childhood Reading Interest.

At first, the teacher sets a special time for 15 minutes as an opening activity in each Story Morning session. At 07.15 -07.30 the teacher welcomes the children in front of the classroom. Meanwhile, some teachers will direct the children to put their bags and provide time to play with the play tools available in the classroom, such as legos, to give children the opportunity to socialize while waiting for their friends.

After 07:30, the children are directed to sit in a circle (circle time) in the classroom area, which signifies the start of the Morning Story session. This activity is carried out as an opening activity integrated in the Daily Learning Implementation Plan (RPPH), the

teacher will include the type of storybook that will be read, the media used, and the props that support the activity. All of these components aim as guidelines for teachers in implementing Morning Story so that this activity runs smoothly and can achieve its goal, namely increasing children's interest in reading.



Picture 3: Daily Lesson Plan

In addition, as part of the evaluation, teachers prepare daily evaluation notes in the form of anecdotes. This record serves to record the development of each child during the Morning Story activity. This evaluation is also a reference for teachers to adjust the approaches and methods used to better suit the needs and development of children. The results of this evaluation will later be discussed with parents to strengthen the synergy between schools and parents in supporting children's growth and development.

In the early stages of implementing *Morning Story*, the teacher begins by coordinating the children to sit in the form of (Circle Time). This activity has the benefit of fostering children's social development. Sitting in a circle allows children to see each other and communicate directly, so they can learn to share attention, listen and interact positively. Circle Time also creates opportunities for children to talk and express themselves freely, which is crucial in the development of their social and emotional skills (Vi et al., 2022).

Then the teacher starts by greeting the children and inviting them to have a conversation, such as asking how they are, which provides an opportunity for children to share their stories. This greeting process serves as ice breaking, which acts as a trigger for children's enthusiasm and cheerfulness before starting the activity. This activity provides a psychological boost for children to feel comfortable and ready to participate in Morning Story activities (Katni et al., 2022).



Picture 4: of morning story activity

After the ice breaking session, the teacher then introduces the storybook that will be read to the children. For example, the teacher shows the book entitled "I Love to Do Good". Before starting the reading, the teacher asks sparking questions to stimulate children's curiosity, such as: "Does anyone know what are some examples of good deeds?" This question aims to open a dialog and invite children to think more deeply about the values in the story they are about to hear. In this way, children are invited not only to listen, but also to be actively involved in the learning process (Lestari et al., 2023).

After that, the teacher continues with the read aloud method. In this method, the teacher reads the book with varied voice intonations and expressions, which are adjusted to the roles in the story and the plot that takes place. By using interesting reading techniques, teachers can create a lively and dynamic atmosphere (Arianti et al., 2023). The use of facial expressions, changes in voice tone, and emphasis on certain words provide a more in-depth experience for children. This method helps to develop children's language skills, such as vocabulary, story comprehension, and the ability to follow the storyline after the teacher has finished reading the story in the Morning Story session (Kholik, 2023).

The next step is to engage the children in a short discussion. The teacher asks questions that are reflective in nature and encourage children to think deeper, such as "What good deeds do you think the character in this story has done?" or "Who has done a similar favor to the child in this story? Tell me about it!" The questions create engagement, keep their attention, and develop critical thinking skills. Children are encouraged to share personal experiences, recognize the value of kindness and express opinions confidently. This discussion also strengthens relationships between children, strengthens their ability to speak in front of their peers, and improves their understanding of the story they have just heard (Ngadha et al., 2023). During the morning story activity, the researcher did not document it because the school did not allow holding cellphones except during recess.

In addition, teachers conduct evaluation records aimed at understanding children's development during the Morning Story activity. In this evaluation, teachers record several important aspects, such as children's attention during the activity, their level of enthusiasm in listening to the story, as well as their ability to discuss with friends. The teacher also evaluates the enthusiasm and expressions shown by the children during the story, which reflects their emotional engagement with the story and the activity (Yusra, 2022).

In the next stage, after the Morning Story activity is over, the teacher provides information about the book that will be read in the next session. It is interesting and relevant to the children's interests, which aims to encourage their curiosity and increase their enthusiasm for reading activities the next day. By providing an overview of the book to be read, the teacher creates anticipation and makes children more interested in participating in the Morning Story session. It also gives children the opportunity to think further about the topic and develop their curiosity about the world of books.

The habit of Morning Story that is carried out continuously has a positive impact, one of which is the increasing interest of children in books. This interest is not only limited to the books read during Morning Story, but also to the collection of books in the school library and the reading corner in the classroom. Children feel encouraged to explore more books and read outside of Story Morning activities, making books part of their daily activities (Ni'matuthoyyibah et al., 2022).

In addition, teachers give children the freedom to read during break time. To further motivate children, teachers also provide a take-home book borrowing program so that children can continue reading at home with their families. The program also encourages parents to get involved in their children's reading activities, strengthening family relationships through fun literacy activities. Each child is given the opportunity to record their impressions in a reading journal, which can be done with the help of parents. By

involving parents in this process, teachers also strengthen the cooperation between school and family in supporting children's holistic literacy development.

The availability of facilities and infrastructure that support literacy activities, such as school libraries, reading corners and book borrowing programs, is very important in fostering children's interest in reading. Teachers play an active role in utilizing these facilities and consistently implement the Morning Story habit to build children's love for books. By working on interesting reading methods, such as varied and interactive read aloud techniques, teachers succeed in creating a fun atmosphere and motivating children to engage more deeply with books.

One of the efforts made by teachers is to provide reading journals that allow children to record their impressions and opinions about the books they have read. The journal is also a means for parents to participate in the child's literacy process, discuss the books read, and assist the child in developing writing skills and telling their experiences (Nurhayati, 2019). The existing book borrowing program allows children to take home books they like and continue reading at home, creating a literacy atmosphere that involves the whole family (Ray et al., 2024).

It was observed that the children showed more enthusiasm for books after participating in the Morning Story activity. They often came to the reading corner in the classroom to look at the collection of books. The children also actively interacted with books, for example by describing the pictures they saw or asking the teacher to tell them about the books they found. This shows that Morning Story activities not only increase their interest in reading, but also encourage children to be more independent in exploring the world of books. Thus, a combination of adequate facilities, fun learning methods and consistent habituation can form strong literacy habits in children. This not only affects their reading skills, but also builds a solid foundation for their love of books.



Picture 5: children and teachers reading books in the school library

The limitations of this research do not include the obstacles faced by teachers in implementing Morning Story habituation in children. However, it is clear that every habituation effort must be faced with challenges. Teachers certainly experience various obstacles in providing interesting media and props, choosing story themes that match children's interests, and coordinating children in every Morning Story activity. In addition, the process of evaluating children's development is also a challenge for teachers to ensure that every child is well involved in this activity.

Thus, the results of observations show that the Morning Story habit that is carried out consistently still has a positive impact. Morning Story has proven to be successful in fostering and increasing children's interest in reading. Children became more interested and active in reading, both at school through the reading corner and at home with borrowed books. In addition, the positive expressions shown by the children, such as

smiles, laughter, and sharing stories, reinforce that this activity is effective in creating fun literacy habits.

Conclusion

This study shows that the consistent implementation of Morning Story habituation by teachers has a positive impact in fostering children's interest in reading. Morning Story activities succeed in creating a pleasant reading habit for children. With the support of adequate facilities and interesting methods, children show high enthusiasm in reading, both at school and at home. This habit not only increases reading interest, but also strengthens children's social and emotional engagement, which will have a positive impact on their future development.

Morning Story habituation can be a reference for habituation activities in schools to increase interest in reading in early childhood. Teachers are expected to apply consistently using creative and innovative methods. Future research can examine the effect of Morning Story habituation.

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