

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Literacy is a crucial thing in the world of education. It can increase people's ability to understand things, gain insight about the world, and gain knowledge as a human. According to UNESCO (2017), Literacy is closely related to language, which is a basic language skill such as reading. That is one of the skills that must be mastered by all students, from an early age and adult learner. Reading is a mandatory and initial skill every student learns because all learning activities involve reading. That skill can help with other language skills, including speaking and writing (Mansyur, 2018). Based on this assumption, we can be certain that students' reading skills must be mastered early.

Reading is crucial in life, especially in the rapidly growing information era. The ability to read is necessary in modern life because various messages and information are delivered in writing, requiring everyone to have good reading skills. Reading competence is required of all students; it can determine the success or failure of the teaching and learning process (Faradina, 2017). Students must be able to recognize, comprehend, and apply what they have learned through the teaching and learning process in the world of education.

According to Friantary (2018), reading is the process of pronouncing writing in order to understand its content. Pronunciation is not always audible; for example, reading silently is an activity that cannot be distinct from listening, speaking, and writing. In the world of education, reading is a basic ability that

students and lower-grade students must possess. If a child cannot read, then they will have difficulty following various lessons at school. The ability to read will make it easier for students to adapt to the learning process because reading activities are closely related to all learning activities. Therefore, reading is one of the basic skills needed in learning activities at school.

Technological developments and times have greatly influenced the decline in students' interest in reading. Students are more interested in gadgets than reading (Permatasari, 2015). According to the most recent PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) data for 2022, Indonesia's reading literacy score has decreased. In 2022, Indonesia's reading literacy score reached 359 points, down 12 points from 2018's 371 points. Its mean is ranked 71st out of 81 participating countries. This proves that literacy in Indonesia is very low, which will also affect the quality of human resources. These literacy issues are mostly caused by Indonesian children being distracted by other things such as watching, playing games, and other activities using gadgets. Another reason is the lack of access to books or a proper library at school, which reduces students' motivation to read.

Therefore, teachers must be able to apply appropriate teaching methods to build interest and good reading skills in students. This is especially important for lower-class students, such as those in elementary school, as this is an initial ability that is very important for continuing the learning stages. Elementary school students are of an early age and need appropriate reading teaching methods to make building their early fundamental skills easier. The use of appropriate strategies by teachers will create conducive learning; not only that, but varied teaching methods are also very necessary to avoid boredom and increase students' enthusiasm for learning.

Learning variation is an implementation carried out by teachers to improve the quality of learning. Teachers can take actions to motivate students with various learning resources, learning media, learning methods, and interaction patterns between teachers and students.

In carrying out variations to teaching reading, appropriate methods are needed so that it is not boring for students. According to Friantary (2018), teachers, as the front line of education in schools, must be able to implement GLS (Gerakan literasi Sekolah). Teachers must present creative and innovative activities to encourage, develop, and grow students' reading skills. It is hoped that through these creative and innovative activities, students will develop strong reading skills and pass on a reading culture to future generations. For elementary school students, a teacher needs appropriate strategies and methods in teaching reading, and the teacher must plan activities that increase student enthusiasm. According to Azkia and Rohman (2020), an effective method is an activity that allows children to be proactive and continue to develop knowledge independently. This is because each child has a different sensitivity to how they read each other. Reading activities are carried out in an atmosphere of play and learning, and children will not experience stressful learning activities because their ability to focus on a topic is usually very limited.

The Montessori method is one approach that can be used to teach young learners to read. The Montessori method of teaching reading consists of various methods and activities designed to support children's natural development in language and reading comprehension. Related to the reading problem, Maria Montessori is a psychologist who has created various ways to overcome reading

problems at an early age. It is called the Montessori method (Azkia & Rohman, 2020). This method utilizes learning media accompanied by the teacher. When they make a mistake, the teacher corrects it. According to Bavli and Kocabas (2022), Montessori learning environments, referred to as prepared environments, give children the freedom to choose their own work and develop their own learning. Because the child is at the center and the teacher's roles are distinct from those of traditional school teachers, the direction of interactions and collaboration between the child and the teacher is established accordingly. In the Montessori method of learning to read, the child's learning initiative is guided by the teacher, letting the students read gradually (Bennett, 2022). Props or game tools are designed to support abstract learning through sensory experiences. Interacting with visual aids can introduce and strengthen children's memory for letters and words, providing a solid foundation for building abstract knowledge. Children are constantly challenged with interesting material and exercises.

Based on preliminary observation conducted in December 18, 2023, the researcher observed class conditions in the school and teaching and learning process to teachers of primary school in Singaraja Montessori School has used Montessori-based instruction as a learning methods in the classroom and have implemented various reading activities in the classroom to increase student literacy. There are several media provided in the class to teaching reading it is called a set box. For example, using a picture and without a picture reading card set for initial reading. In this method, the teacher gives a picture to the students, for example, the beginning of the letter a, then under the picture, the name of the picture is written, and the students are asked to read the writing under the picture, after that the next

stage, the teacher gives a set of cards which only have words written without pictures, and the students were asked to read the word. Apart from that, they were also given picture cards and letter cards to learn phonics, and students are also given a reading comprehension task to promote critical thinking and understanding of text that adapts to their reading level that consists of level a-z. This package consists of a variety of fun activities which will certainly improve students' understanding of reading.

Many researchers persistently have conducted research regarding the analysis of Montessori based literacy instruction in teaching reading. The first research came from Azkia and Rohman (2020). The aim of this research is to implement a new concept, namely the Montessori method for beginning reading for students in Indonesian language subjects in the lower grades. The results of this research are: (1) Providing a new model to stimulate children's/students' initial reading comprehension, (2) Providing concepts to strengthen students' initial absorptive thinking (3) Meeting the needs of students' sensitive periods. Then the second research is Aay (2016) This research aims to investigate how to improve initial reading skills in class I students at SDN Karangmekar 03 Kedungwaringin Bekasi by using the Montessori Method as a method for teaching reading. The data results show that using the Montessori Method improves the quality of early reading learning for students, makes students more active, and teaches students to be more careful in handling cards made of rough paper. Another research study by Agustina (2020) aims to explain the ability of lower-grade students to read and write early and to carry out the Montessori method to enhance their reading and writing abilities. The research finding shows that beginning reading and writing refers to

the stage of learning to read and write at an early stage, typically at the age of six or grade one elementary school children who have reached maturity or readiness in learning to read and write. The Montessori method, based on the Montessori theory and developed according to the theory of child development, is used to help students develop cognitive, psychomotor, and affective abilities appropriate for their developmental level.

Based on the explanation, which analyzed how the implementation of the Montessori method in teaching reading and the use of this method has been proven to improve the quality of students' reading, the use of Montessori can facilitate students well and help the process of teaching reading to young learners. From that research, researchers have implemented and investigated whether using the Montessori method can help students start reading. Additionally, it is important to examine what examples of reading activities and what instructional media are used in teaching reading using the Montessori-based instruction method to young learners, and how this method is carried out with students. In connection with this, researchers are interested in examining students' reading activities using the Montessori Based Instruction method at Singaraja Montessori School. This research aims to describe examples of reading activities and instructional media that are carried out in teaching reading using the Montessori-based instruction method at Singaraja Montessori Primary School. Researchers hope that this research is beneficial for readers and will inspire them to develop reading methods for early learners.

The researcher examines reading activities because reading is crucial in education. After all, it helps students develop their academic and intellectual skills.

Reading is the foundation of knowledge and skills taught at the beginning of school because the ability to read helps students develop other abilities. Aside from that, all subjects at school require students to be able to read because they all contain texts or other reading activities. Reading will also help students learn how to evaluate information and develop analytical skills for understanding the context and meaning of the texts they read. The Montessori method takes a distinctive method to teaching reading that differs from conventional methods. Research on these methods may provide understanding on how different methods affect children's reading learning outcomes. Research on the Montessori method of teaching reading may offer context on how to improve the effectiveness of literacy education in schools. Research on reading instruction in the Montessori context can help us better understand how to help children develop critical reading skills.

1.2 Problem Identification

Teaching reading to young learners requires appropriate and varied methods so that it is not boring and can increase students' motivation and reading ability. Students' lack of interest in reading causes them to be less fluent in reading. Especially for primary students, inappropriate learning facilities and methods also affect students' reading motivation. The method of teaching reading is important because it gives students the impression of understanding. Appropriate reading activities will facilitate students in improving students reading skills, such as using appropriate methods in teaching reading that provide various reading-related activities that will train students' reading abilities. Research on reading activity may be abundant, but not much attention has been paid to discussing reading activities

in primary school using the Montessori Based Instruction method in the field of EFL research. So for this reason, the researcher is interested in conducting this research to analyze the reading activities carried out by students using the Montessori Based Instruction method and how teachers use this method in teaching reading to young learners.

1.3 Research Question

1.3.1 What are reading activities using the Montessori-based Instruction Method implemented by teachers in teaching reading for primary students in Singaraja Montessori School?

1.3.2 How are the reading activities carried out by the teachers in each reading activity?

1.4 Research Objectives

Based on the research question, the objectives of this research are as follows:

1.4.1 To describe reading activities using Montessori-based Instruction Method for primary students in Singaraja Montessori School.

1.4.2 To describe how are the reading activities carried out by the teachers in each reading activity for primary students in Singaraja Montessori School.

1.5 Research Significances

This research is expected will be beneficial and provide inspiration for English language education students, English teachers, and other researchers as well, The significance given is in theoretically and practically:

1.5.1 Theoretical Significance

The theoretical significance of this study is to enrich educational knowledge about teaching reading activities using the Montessori instructional method to lower grades students at elementary school level or early learners and how teachers carried out this method in the classroom.

1.5.2 Practical Significance

a. For the teachers

This research is expected to be useful and provide evidence regarding reading teaching methods for teachers in teaching reading to young learners. Researcher also hopes that this research can be an inspiration that can improve teacher competence to continue to create variations and methods in teaching reading to elementary school students.

b. For students of English Language Education

This research is expected to provide knowledge that can be used to develop the quality of pedagogical content knowledge in teaching reading for prospective English teachers in teaching reading to young learners.

c. For other researchers

This research is expected to provide information and references to other researchers who are writing any further related research.

1.6 Research Scope

This research is limited to analyzing reading activities carried out using the Montessori-based Instruction method among elementary school students at Singaraja Montessori School. Moreover, this research describes how reading activities are carried out by teachers with students during the learning process.

