

The Use of Microsoft Teams during Distance Learning and Its Impact on Increasing Students' Reading Interest

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ABSTRAK

Sejak pandemi covid 19 menyebar di Indonesia, seluruh satuan pendidikan memberlakukan program belajar jarak jauh. Hal ini menuntut sekolah untuk menggunakan platform pembelajaran yang dapat mengoptimalkan interaksi belajar guru dan siswa. Dengan platform yang disediakan guru perlu membuat pembelajaran lebih menarik dan dapat mencapai tujuan pembelajaran. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisa secara lebih dalam untuk design pembelajaran menggunakan Microsoft teams selama pembelajaran jarak jauh dalam meningkatkan minat baca siswa kelas rendah di masa pandemi. Dalam pendekatannya, peneliti menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif untuk menggambarkan dan menjelaskan keadaan yang terjadi secara nyata. Sampel penelitian berjumlah 5 guru, 10 siswa, dan 10 orang tua siswa. Metode pengumpulan data pada penelitian ini adalah menggunakan observasi dan wawancara dilaksanakan secara daring atau tidak langsung dengan menggunakan google form atau telepon akibat situasi pandemi Covid-19 yang terjadi di Indonesia ketika penelitian ini berlangsung. Teknik analisis yang digunakan adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa penggunaan Microsoft Teams untuk pembelajaran jarak jauh dinilai efektif dalam meningkatkan minat baca siswa kelas rendah. Adanya fitur-fitur yang menarik yang ditawarkan di dalamnya pun mempermudah guru dan siswa dalam melaksanakan kegiatan belajar mengajar, serta orang tua dapat ikut memantau perkembangan pembelajaran anaknya.

ABSTRACT

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all education units in Indonesia have implemented distance learning programs. This requires schools to use learning platforms to enhance teacher and student learning interactions. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to make learning more interesting and achieve learning objectives with available platforms. This study aims to analyses more deeply learning designs utilizing Microsoft Teams within distance learning to increase reading interest in lower grade students during the pandemic. Descriptive qualitative methods are applied as the approaches to describe and explain the actual circumstances. The research subject consisted of 5 teachers, 10 students, and 10 parents. The method of data collection in this study is to use observations and interviews were conducted online employing Google Form or phone due to the Covid-19 pandemic occurred in Indonesia during the research. The analysis technique used is descriptive qualitative. The result shows the effectiveness of Microsoft Teams for the online learning in enhancing lower grade students' reading interests. The interesting features offered in it also make it easier for teachers and students to perform teaching and learning activities, while parents can participate in monitoring their children's learning progress as well. Suggestion: parents can also participate to monitor activities and developments in learning process.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the language skills involving visual activities which have an important role to improve the quality of education and human resources. Reading is a literacy skill that also has had an important role to face challenges in the 21st century (Kivunja, 2014; Risqi & Rini Setianingsih, 2021). The wave of the industrial revolution 4.0 which is very rapidly developing in the world today has an impact on

the progress of science and technology access to information and knowledge is gained by reading (Auphan et al., 2020; Bauer & Booth, 2019). Based on this, people need to be able to have the ability to read to have better insight and quality of life which will certainly affect their daily lives. Reading skills need to be based on an interest in reading (Georgiou et al., 2021; Mcgeown et al., 2016). Someone needs an interest in reading to understand the contents of the reading and not feel bored while reading (Linder et al., 2018; Nurlaela et al., 2018; Wang et al., 2020). Reading interests is one of the factors affecting a person's decision to read (Amiruddin, 2022; Nurtika, 2019; Rahim, 2018).

However, the fact is that the results related to reading interest at the Indonesian literacy level were still very low, especially among the younger generation. According to International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) for 5th graders in the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2011, Indonesia ranked the 45th of the total 48 participant countries with 428 total scores from the average score of 500 (citation) (Nurdin, 2019; Sari et al., 2020). Then, in 2015, Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) reported that Indonesia was in the 65th rank from total 72 participant countries in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Ayunin et al., 2013; Nugrahanto & Zuchdi, 2019). Based on the data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) in 2012 the reading interest of the Indonesian people was still relatively low. It was stated that only about 17.66% of people have an interest in reading (Sumaryanti, 2020; Utami & Nur, 2021). The rest preferred watching television and listening to the radio. This finding was also corroborated by data from UNESCO stating that there were only 0.0001% of the people who diligently read. This means that was only 1 person was interested in reading out of 1000 population.

The role of the teacher here is to be able to create useful and innovative media for students. Teachers need to find the right strategy to increase students' reading interest (Käsper et al., 2018; Singh et al., 2021). Teachers at the Kalam Kudus Christian Elementary School during online learning used flipped learning in delivering learning materials. Students will be given material before learning begins. This material can be read by students at home using the Microsoft Teams platform. Then the teacher and students will discuss the material in an online virtual meeting through Microsoft Teams. Here students have many opportunities to read at home but in reality the literacy skills and reading interest of early grade students were decreasing. This was due to several factors, namely teachers couldn't directly monitor student learning processes, students were more interested in gadgets, lack of motivation to study at home, and differences in learning activities during online learning. The findings of previous studies also stated that students' reading interest during online learning has decreased due to changes in the learning system (Fauziyah & Kurniawan, 2020). During online learning, changes in reading activities are different from offline learning. Other research also explained that during the pandemic, elementary students' reading interests decreased due to a lack of motivation during distance learning (Fahmy et al., 2021; Widodo et al., 2020). The same thing was also conveyed by previous research, there are limited literacy skills for students' reading interest during online learning (Damaianti et al., 2020).

It was interesting for researchers to research on the reading interest of early grade students in a private elementary school in Yogyakarta city. Early grade teachers at the Kalam Kudus Christian Elementary School, Yogyakarta, always provide reading to their students through a feature that can be connected to Microsoft Teams. Features that can be utilized in Microsoft Teams are PPT, PDF, Word, ebook links, videos, discussion forums, quiz apps, word walls, kahoot, etc (Pratolo & Lofti, 2021; Rajendran & Shah, 2020). In addition, teachers and students can interact virtually using Microsoft Teams online using the meeting feature (Chan & Lee, 2021; Ismaili, 2020). The motivation for reading textbooks was also explored by the teacher during online classes with students during a question and answer session about reading interests. The findings of a previous study related to the use of Microsoft Teams also stated that Microsoft Teams provides a feature that allows teachers and students to share files and learning content (Ayyoub et al., 2021). In addition, the Microsoft Teams platform also provides a space for teachers and students to interact online. Microsoft Teams also makes it easier for teachers to do attendance and grading. The difference between previous research and the research conducted was in the variables. In previous studies, the only variables were reading interest or the use of Microsoft Teams. Meanwhile, in the latest research, there were 2 variables studied, namely Microsoft Teams and reading interest. Therefore, further research is needed to be able to obtain data related to reading interests and Microsoft Teams during online learning. This study aimed to analyses the effectiveness of using Microsoft Teams to increase early-grade students' reading interests during online learning.

2. METHOD

This research used a qualitative descriptive method which. This method aimed to describe, explain, and answer in details the problems while maximally studying about person, group, or event (Almeida, 2020;

Sugiyono, 2016). In the applications, this method used to grasp deeper about the usage of Microsoft teams during online learning and its function in increasing lower grade students' learning interests throughout the pandemic. This research was conducted at Kalam Kudus Christian Elementary School of Yogyakarta. The data collection technique used in this research was an observation that employs questionnaires and direct participation in teaching and learning activities, which continued by doing deep interview and documenting. The interviewees were five teachers, ten students of lower grade, and ten student parents. The observation and interview instrument are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Reading Interest Instrument

Aspects of Reading Interest	Indicator
Aspect of consciousness	1. Reading books to increase knowledge.
	2. Reading activities to know the contents of the book
	3. Reading activities make you smarter
	4. Reading books on their own accord without coercion from parents or teachers.
Attention Aspect	1. Interested in reading activities
	2. Every time I get a chance I always want to read a new book.
	3. Prefer reading to playing or watching youtube.
	4. Collecting reading books at home
	5. Enjoy reading activities
Feeling Happy Aspect	1. Enjoy reading a book
	2. Always excited when there are reading activities
	3. Happy to get a new book
	4. Always read a book before going to sleep
Frequency Aspect	1. Before learning activities, always read a book first
	2. Every time I have an assignment or homework I always read a book

The data collection was carried out offline and online, considering the timeline of the research conducted during the pandemic period. This research was carried out periodically and supported by the Microsoft Teams platform that keeps on developing and presenting the latest features. Data analysis used analysis, namely data reduction, data presentation and verification (Mulyaningsih, 2019; Sugiyono, 2019). Data analysis activities are carried out to completion so that the data is saturated. Data analysis aims to identify the themes of the questionnaires and interviews that will find important or interesting patterns to discuss or to find the purpose of this study (Stylinski et al., 2020; Utarini, 2020).

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

This research is begun by doing direct and indirect observation at the field. Observation is done to observe teaching and learning activities done at SD Kristen Kalam Kudus Yogyakarta in Covid-19 pandemic. In the early observation, researcher found that each teaching and learning activity is fully done online and Microsoft Teams platform is fully used. Further, the researcher wants to know the reading interests of students of SD Kristen Kalam Kudus Yogyakarta, specifically those belong to low grade using questionnaires. The researcher arranged questions based on four factors that push reading interests which are reading pleasure, awareness of reading benefits, reading frequency, and number of books have been read. The researcher found that almost all students do not like reading. They rather do other activities such as watching television or *YouTube*. But the result is almost equal for 'yes' and 'no' related to the awareness of reading benefits. This case can be sufficiently understood because the stage of children in this case is in correspondence with their cognitive growth, which is in concrete operational stage. This stage range in the age seven until eleven years old. The cognitive development, or which can be easily defined as the ability to think for children in this case, is described by the limited ability to think in concrete or real things. At the frequency of reading point, the researcher also finds that most of the student do not read books or spend their spare time in reading activity. Furthermore, the existence of gadget given specially for children makes them tend to spend their free time for playing games or watching. For the last point, the questionnaire results show that almost half of the population has more than ten books other than school books, the other half has more than five, and only few who have one to two books. Besides the four factors, the researchers try to seek the information about the book genres that might increase low grade students' reading interest.

Almost all answer pictured-collared-story-book, while the rest state picture book. It is because picture books give more balance in the text and the picture. In addition, picture books can attract students' attention by providing real examples or concepts. Then, these things become the guidelines for the interviewees and researcher to look further at interesting features offered by Microsoft Teams to help increasing low grade students' reading interests. Furthermore, when the researcher asked about the understanding about animal story books and tales given by the teachers via Microsoft Teams, almost all stated that they understood with only one said not always understood.

Deep interview is done to understand the execution of Microsoft Teams usage during online learning and the effect in improving low grade students' reading interests. In doing the interview, there are many variations of answers given by the interviewees, but in the outline there is a pattern concluded by the researcher. In the interview with low grade teachers about their experience in using Microsoft teams as the media used in teaching and learning, they said it is very useful. Specifically, this platform offers features that ease online teaching and learning activity. Other than easy usage feature, the features are interesting so it can add variations that cannot be obtained from offline teaching learning activity. Not only do the teachers feel helped by Microsoft Teams's features, but the students also enjoy this kind of teaching learning activity. In tests sessions, both teachers and students feel facilitated by quiz features and also in giving the theory, where there is power point feature that can present the theory easily. Thus, all interviewees stated that Microsoft Teams platform is effective to use in the online teaching learning activity. There are, however, other things that sometimes interrupt the activity, for example the signal and unstable internet connection which made the activity does not flow smoothly. There is also solution to solve the problem, after all.

From parents' point of view, more than 60% said that using Microsoft Teams is more effective than using WhatsApp application once used at the beginning of pandemic. In the application, this platform help them to accompany their children with feedback feature. Other than that, the effectiveness can be shown from the interviewees' result of some students and students' parents who are satisfied with the features and the availability at their gadget. This thing raises the interest of the students, since some of them do like using their gadget to learn and play. Based on the results of the research, early stage children are interested more in pictures and videos in advanced feature in the gadget. During the online learning activity, students are more often accompanied by their parents rather than teachers at school which makes the platform's usage ease the involvement of parents, which is really needed. Thus, it can be stated that Microsoft Teams usage is indeed effective in the teaching learning activity for low grade student during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Discussion

There are various questions that the researcher asked to see the effect of using Microsoft Teams in improving the reading interest of these lower grade students. This interview question is intended for lower grade teachers who teach especially languages that are directly related to the process of developing lower grade students' reading skills. The results of the interviews were summarized by grade level. The researcher found that there were several differences in the process of increasing interest in reading based on the grade level and students' reading ability. According to sources, for grade 1 students, there is no significant difference from previous years, both *online* and *offline*. Because from year to year almost all grade 1 elementary school students have not been able to fluently read and understand the contents of the reading, it is difficult to find the difference. Here, the role of parents is more important than formal educators such as teachers. This was once expressed by previous research who stated that the role of parents in children's education includes caregivers and educators, mentors, motivators, and facilitators (Kurniati et al., 2020; Lilawati, 2020; Ramdan & Fauziah, 2019; Susanto & Suyadi, 2020). Coupled with research conducted by other researcher which states that the role of parents in determining student achievement is immense (Acar et al., 2021; Irma et al., 2019; Zulparis et al., 2021). Education that only relies on learning in schools does not necessarily guarantee the success of students in their learning. On the other hand, parents who always pay attention to their children, especially attention to their learning activities at home, will make children more active and more enthusiastic in learning because they know that it is not only themselves who want to progress, but their parents also have the same strong desires. Therefore, the learning outcomes or learning achievements achieved by students become better (Harahap et al., 2021; Yulianingsih et al., 2020).

For the second and third graders, the interviewees stated differently because there were obstacles for the teacher in monitoring students who could not yet read directly. There were two interviewees who added four students in the class who could not read fluently, which can be concluded that in the years before the students, half until most, can read fluently and then the pandemic decreased the number. From the interviewees' description, the parents' guidance was needed in balancing the teachers' role in the school. A little difference from the student parents' role in the first grader, the parents' role for second and third grader was needed to help students to understand and apply the tasks and theory given by teachers. Even

though not playing full role, the help still significantly affected the students' reading fluency. Added more for the second grader who in the year before never had experience of offline school, the parents' role surely had huge impact to the growth of the students' reading ability (Kucirkova et al., 2021; Padmadewi et al., 2018).

In handling the problems, researchers found that the usage of Microsoft Teams could increase the students' reading interests' even though they neither could fluently read nor understand the meaning of a whole passage yet. Interesting power point, word, and learning video usage could help the students to understand part of the story or other reading passage. Based on research done by previous researcher interesting illustration and moving picture could help children to understand the meaning of a story and help increase their reading interests (Golding & Verrier, 2021; Putri et al., 2018; Strouse & Ganea, 2021; Surya et al., 2020). Picture books give more balance in the text and the picture (Dermata, 2019; Golding & Verrier, 2021; Hanson et al., 2017; Strouse & Ganea, 2021; Sumantri et al., 2017). This can help students build concepts when observing and reading picture books (Agung et al., 2017; Lutfiyah & Mansur, 2018; Toh et al., 2017). This is reinforced by research which states that children are attracted to images or videos displayed on advanced features such as gadgets (Nirwana et al., 2018; Salis Hijriyani & Astuti, 2020; Syifa et al., 2019).

It was added more by one interviewee who stated that their students were really enthusiastic in the learning materials which used interactive media offered in Microsoft Teams (Chan & Lee, 2021; Mohmad et al., 2021; Rojabi, 2020). Students also tended to be confident when they were asked to read texts or sentences displayed in the monitor during online class. But for the third graders, there was more significant growth rather than the grade below. Some interviewees stated that reading interests for the third grader increased for 80% during online learning activity. It proved that microsoft teams features could support the increase on low grade students' reading interests, specifically for the third graders. The difference was supported by the different reading ability for early aged student, which reading fluently affects to students' reading interests. Other than giving learning material online using Microsoft Teams features, teachers also gave printed materials that could be studied outside online learning activity. The instruction to read questions when doing the given tasks was also one of the methods used to increase ability and interests of students' reading.

Researchers also found that high students' reading interests also affect other children in understanding another learning material. It is shown by the interview result from one interviewee who said that students fluent in reading and show high interest in reading have better grades than those who were not. This shows the similar result with previous research that showed there was significant connection between reading interests and grades, especially for science class (Retariandalas, 2017; Wahyuni et al., 2020). Even though this research was not comparing science grade with reading interests in particular, researchers also find that students with reading interests could more easily understand science materials they got. Based on the results obtained, this study also has limitations. The limitation of this research was only conducted during online learning. Both of these studies were limited to early-grade students. The recommendation for further research is that further research needs to be carried out after online learning and can also be done in the upper class higher grade to compare reading interest during online learning and after online learning.

The implications of this study bring information about benefit and impact of the usage of Microsoft Teams during Distance learning of Low Grade Student. It is useful for educator especially teacher in low grade level as a reference in choosing appropriate learning media in conduct online learning. From this study the researcher also give suggestion to students' parents to teach students to read by reading fairy tales before going to bed or reading thematic books together to them, which can increase students' vocabulary. As their vocabulary increases and interest in reading begins to show, research shows that children will find it easier to understand the material given during online learning. This study still have limitations, one of them is on subject of this study that limited only involving parties in one school. Hopefully future research can conduct deeper research related to the use of Microsoft Teams.

4. CONCLUSION

In this research, the researcher concluded that the use of the Microsoft team for lower grade students tends to be effective in increasing reading interests in Kalam Kudus Christian School in Yogyakarta during online learning. This can be seen from the enthusiasm of teachers, parents, and students who feel helped by the interesting features in Microsoft Teams. The results showed that there was a willingness of students to learn to read when given material through interesting and interactive media. This media is certainly one of the features in the Microsoft team. Students' reading interest seemed to increase when exposed to the interesting features of Microsoft Teams. On the other hand, the role of parents is important

to help their children to increase interest in reading, not only by helping to increase interest in reading but also by them understanding the material that students have during online learning.

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