

Transforming Literacy: The Impact of Chromebook and Let's Read on Elementary Students' Reading Engagement

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ABSTRAK

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Kemampuan literasi peserta didik di Indonesia masih menjadi perhatian serius dalam dunia pendidikan. Kurangnya minat membaca di kalangan peserta didik, khususnya pada jenjang pendidikan dasar, menuntut integrasi teknologi dalam pembelajaran sebagai solusi inovatif. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi dampak penggunaan Chromebook dan aplikasi Let's Read terhadap minat membaca peserta didik melalui cerita bergambar. Pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode studi kasus digunakan dalam penelitian ini, dengan melibatkan 30 peserta didik dari dua sekolah dasar sebagai subjek penelitian. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan tren positif dalam keterlibatan dan antusiasme peserta didik, serta peningkatan konsentrasi dan fokus selama proses pembelajaran. Laporan guru mengonfirmasi bahwa penggunaan Chromebook dan Let's Read memberikan dampak signifikan terhadap peningkatan motivasi membaca dan eksplorasi cerita bergambar. Namun, penelitian ini juga menemukan beberapa tantangan, seperti kendala teknis dan penyesuaian kurikulum. Meskipun demikian, integrasi teknologi dalam pembelajaran menunjukkan hasil yang menjanjikan dalam meningkatkan minat membaca dan keterampilan literasi peserta didik. Penelitian ini menyimpulkan bahwa penggunaan Chromebook dan aplikasi Let's Read dapat menciptakan lingkungan belajar yang lebih menarik dan efektif, mendorong keterlibatan aktif peserta didik dalam proses membaca. Temuan ini menegaskan pentingnya pemanfaatan teknologi dalam pendidikan dasar untuk menumbuhkan kebiasaan membaca yang berkelanjutan.

ABSTRACT

Students' literacy skills in Indonesia remain a critical concern in education. The lack of reading interest, particularly among elementary school students, necessitates the integration of technology as an innovative solution in learning. This study aims to explore the impact of Chromebook and Let's Read application on students' reading interest through picture stories. A qualitative approach using a case study method was employed, involving 30 students from two elementary schools as research subjects. The results indicated a positive trend in students' engagement and enthusiasm, along with significant improvements in concentration and focus during learning activities. Teacher reports confirmed that the use of Chromebook and Let's Read significantly enhanced students' motivation to read and explore picture stories. However, the study also identified challenges such as technical issues and curriculum adjustments. Despite these obstacles, the integration of technology in education demonstrated promising outcomes in increasing students' reading interest and literacy skills. This research concludes that the use of Chromebook and Let's Read application can create a more engaging and effective learning environment, fostering active student participation in reading activities. The findings emphasize the importance of leveraging technology in elementary education to cultivate sustainable reading habits and improve literacy outcomes.

1. INTRODUCTION

Education stands as a fundamental pillar in shaping the future of a nation, especially in the current era characterized by globalization and the information technology revolution. These factors necessitate a continual adaptation of education, leveraging technological advancements to enhance the quality of learning (Legi et al., 2023; Majeed et al., 2022). At the primary education level, a significant emphasis is placed on reading interest, given its pivotal role in literacy formation (Damyanov & Tsankov, 2018; Khusna

et al., 2022). Moreover, mastering fundamental skills such as reading is essential for every individual's holistic development (Anwas et al., 2022; Apriliana et al., 2022). This underscores the urgency for educational systems to evolve and integrate technology effectively, ensuring that students are equipped with the necessary skills to thrive in an ever-changing world.

The current state of students' literacy skills in Indonesia is poor (Darmiyanti & Taufik, 2021). This indicates that literacy skills have not been fully integrated or implemented comprehensively. Therefore, the reading interest among the younger generation in Indonesia, especially in literacy aspects, remains low (Pangriptaningrum & Hermanto, 2022; Parvathamma & Pattar, 2013). UNESCO reports that Indonesia's reading interest index stands at just 0.001. This means that out of every 1,000 people, only one person shows an interest in reading (Darmiyanti & Taufik, 2021; Pitri & Sofia, 2022; Saputra & Fatmalia, 2022). Furthermore, based on UNESCO's survey, the average Indonesian child reads only 27 pages per vear, and the majority of them, around 63%, spend between 0-2 hours reading each day. In this context, the role of technology, especially the use of Chromebook, becomes a critical focus. Chromebook, as a laptop with Chrome OS, provides easy access to online educational resources (Nurbaeti et al., 2022; Purnomo & Inayati, 2023). One online resource for improving literacy is Let's Read. Let's Read is a digital literacy application created by The Asia Foundation under the Books for Asia program (Amelia et al., 2024). Digital literacy is essential for individuals to navigate the pervasive changes brought by Information and Communication Technologies across various aspects of daily life, including relationships, communication, learning, curiosity, and entertainment (Phippen, 2024; Vélez & Zuazua, 2017). This application is a tangible representation of how technology can be used to optimize students' reading interest through illustrated stories (Amelia et al., 2024; Ananta et al., 2022). This research aims to explore the impact of using Chromebook in enhancing students' reading interest through illustrated stories in the Let's Read application.

In the digital era, fundamental changes are occurring in the education paradigm. Information technology provides opportunities for innovative and engaging learning methods (Azhar Juliantri et al., 2017; Ghavifekr & Rosdy, 2015). This integration of technology into education creates an interactive learning environment, captivating students' interest and keeping them focused on the subject matter. Software, learning applications, and online platforms offer new approaches in delivering lessons (Mahardika et al., 2021; Siti et al., 2021). This shift creates new challenges and opportunities for education, raising critical questions about how technology can be optimized to enhance students' reading interest. Moreover, primary education, as the initial stage in the educational journey, plays a specific role in shaping literacy foundations. Reading instruction involves not only understanding letters and words but also encompasses aspects of interest and motivation (Gay et al., 2021; Rohman et al., 2022). In the primary education environment, teachers are responsible not only for conveying information but also for creating an environment that supports the development of students' reading interest. Reading interest plays a crucial role in shaping students' reading habits and literacy (Ayunin et al., 2013; Lestari et al., 2023).

Engaging in reading has become essential to meet the demands of the 21st century. Students with high reading interest are more motivated to read independently, develop vocabulary, and improve reading comprehension (Alfatihah & Tyas, 2022; Rahma, 2023). If cultivated early, these skills will have a positive impact on academic development and students' social lives. Furthermore, the integration of technology in education has also led to the emergence of personalized learning approaches. Adaptive learning systems, for example, can tailor learning materials and activities based on individual student needs and learning styles (Alrawashdeh et al., 2024; Syahidin, 2020). This customization enhances student engagement and motivation, as lessons are more relevant and accessible to their specific learning requirements. Additionally, technology allows for real-time feedback and assessment, enabling teachers to monitor student progress more effectively and intervene when necessary to provide additional support or challenges. As such, the digital era not only transforms the way students learn but also offers new possibilities for educators to enhance teaching practices and improve learning outcomes.

However, real challenges arise when students' reading interest faces disruptions from various distractions, especially in this digital era. Technological advancements lead children into a world full of visual and audio stimulation, shifting their focus from reading books to more interactive digital content (Latip et al., 2022; Nuha Belvar et al., 2024). Therefore, it is essential to find solutions that combine technology with traditional learning to support and enhance students' reading interest.

Chromebook, designed specifically for online use, offers a solution for integrating technology into education. The advantages of using Chromebook for schools include cost savings, providing stable and durable hardware, and facilitating smooth and continuous learning. This integration allows educators to maintain students" focus and support diverse teaching by providing various options to accommodate different learning styles and abilities. With these advantages, Chromebook has become a popular choice among schools aiming to leverage technology in education. One learning application accessible through

Chromebook is Let's Read, a digital learning platform containing a collection of illustrated storybooks (Albataineh et al., 2024; Dwitalia Sari et al., 2021). Let's Read offers various stories designed to captivate children's attention, immersing them in a rich imaginative world. Interestingly, the narratives in this application can be customized for Indonesian, English, and other languages (Afifatunnisa et al., 2023; Khair et al., 2022). The use of Chromebook to access this application opens new opportunities to enhance students' reading interest.

This research not only attempts to answer questions about the impact of using Chromebook in optimizing students' reading interest but also explores the potential of the Let's Read application as an engaging learning medium. By understanding the educational context, reading interest challenges, and the role of technology, this research seeks to provide in-depth insights into how Chromebook can be effectively integrated into developing students' reading interest. This study focused on exploring the impact of Chromebook and the Let's Read application on students' reading interest through illustrated stories. This study offer the novelty by explores the effectiveness of using Chromebooks and the Let's Read application specifically to increase interest in reading at the elementary school level. With this, this research provides a new view on how this particular technology can be applied in the context of primary education.

2. METHOD

The development of this research methodology is conducted to provide a deep understanding of how the implementation of technology can influence students' reading interest at the primary education level. By applying a qualitative approach and a case study method, this research enables the researchers to explore the context, processes, and impact of using Chromebook in real-life learning situations. The case study approach is used when researchers seek a profound understanding of a particular issue, event, or interesting phenomenon in natural real-life situations (Nurahma & Hendriani, 2021). The selection of a case study is chosen because it facilitates researchers in gaining comprehensive insights into the dynamics of technology usage in the context of primary education. The data collection methods include observing, conducting interviews, and reviewing relevant documents (Rosita et al., 2021).

Research participants involve 4th, 5th, and 6th-grade students from SDN Perdopo 02 and SDN Sidomulyo 02, Pati, Central Java, consisting of 14 males and 16 females, actively engaged in using Chromebook and the Let's Read application from January 8th to 20th, 2024. Research instruments include direct classroom observations two weeks to observe students' interactions with Chromebook, their responses to illustrated stories in Let's Read, Concentration and Learning Focus, Student-Teacher Interactions, and the Utilization of Let's Read Features. Interviews are also conducted with students and class teachers to gain subjective perspectives and in-depth understanding related to the use of Chromebook and the Let's Read application. The interview checklist includes the following aspects as show in Table 1.

No	Category	Aspects	Questions
1	Students	Chromebook Experience	How has been your experience using Chromebook to read stories on Let's Read?
2	Students	Reading Interest	Has the use of Chromebook and Let's Read influenced your reading interest? If yes, how?
3	Students	Interaction with Stories	How do you feel when interacting with illustrated stories in the Let's Read application? Do interactive features help you understand the stories better?
4	Teacher	Teacher Observation	What are your observations regarding student engagement when using Chromebook and Let's Read?
5	Teacher	Impact on Reading Interest	In your opinion, does the use of Chromebook and Let's Read impact students' reading interest?
6	Teacher	Challenges and Successes	Have you faced any specific challenges in integrating this technology into teaching? How did you overcome these challenges?

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Table 1. Interview	Guide for Exp	oloring the Influ	ence of Chrome	book and Let's Read

Document analysis involves evaluating student performance, teacher observation notes, and student responses to Let's Read stories. The data analysis process comprises three main stages (Zakiyyah et al., 2022). Firstly, data reduction is performed by selecting, simplifying, and transforming raw data obtained from field notes. Secondly, data presentation is systematically conducted to facilitate drawing conclusions and taking actions, particularly in the context of qualitative data presented in the form of

narrative texts. Finally, the conclusion drawing stage involves evaluating the results of the analysis and verifying the findings that have been uncovered. The component of data analysis process is presented in Figure 1.

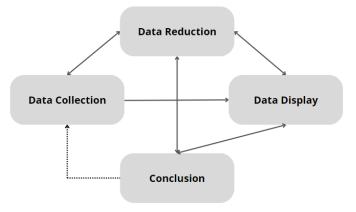


Figure 1. Components of Data Analysis

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Throughout Week 1, a notable positive trend emerges in student-Chromebook interaction, with a significant count of instances. This positive interaction extends into Week 2, further emphasizing its continuity. Additionally, students consistently display enthusiasm in response to the Let's Read application, demonstrating positive engagement during both weeks. The concentration and learning focus during these activities show encouraging levels, with notable improvement observed from Week 1 to Week 2. A noteworthy observation is the substantial positive interaction between students and teachers, prominently recorded during Week 1 and persisting in Week 2. Furthermore, the utilization of Let's Read features consistently yields positive outcomes, reflecting an appreciable increase in instances from week I to week II.

While isolated instances of negative responses are noted, particularly in the categories of Concentration and Learning Focus and Utilization of Let's Read Features, the overarching positive outcomes suggest that the integration of Chromebooks and the Let's Read application effectively enhances student engagement, enriches learning experiences, and cultivates a heightened reading interest at the primary education level. These findings underscore the transformative potential of technology-driven approaches in fostering sustained student participation and a lasting enthusiasm for educational activities. The in-depth analysis of observational data from both week I and week II, as illustrated in Figure 2 and Figure 3, provides a holistic understanding of the integration of Chromebooks and the Let's Read application at SDN Perdopo 02 and SDN Sidomulyo 02.

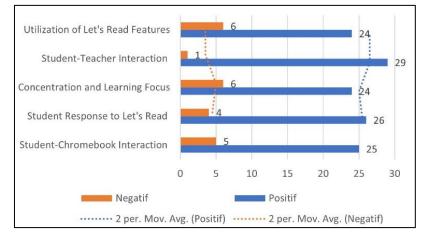


Figure 2. Week I Observation Results

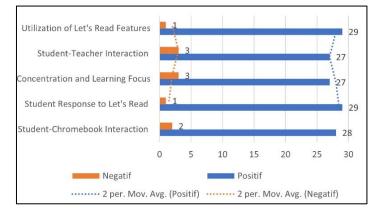


Figure 3. Week II Observation Results

Feedback from teachers also supports these observational findings. Teachers provide positive feedback on student engagement and the use of Chromebook. Some students receive additional guidance and direct support from teachers during the learning sessions. Overall, the use of Chromebook and the Let's Read application provides a positive learning experience and enhances students' enthusiasm in understanding stories. These findings indicate that the implementation of technology in learning can have a positive impact on student engagement and reading interest at the primary education level.

Interviews with students revealed that their experience in using Chromebook to read stories on Let's Read was very positive. They showed a tendency to enjoy the use of Chromebook in learning and highlighted the interactive features that helped them engage more with the stories. Students stated that the use of Chromebook and Let's Read positively influenced their reading interest, with some feeling more motivated to read and explore illustrated stories. The summary of the students' interviews is presented in Table 2.

Table 2.	Summary o	f Student	Interviews
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No	Aspects	Description		
1	Chromebook	The majority of students, 27 out of 30, reported a highly positive experience using		
	Experience	Chromebook to read stories on Let's Read, emphasizing its enjoyable and engaging		
		nature. They consistently expressed delight in using Chromebook for learning		
		activities, highlighting the interactive features as pivotal to their engagement with		
		the stories.		
2	Reading	The majority of students, 26 out of 30, noted a positive influence on their reading		
	Interest	interest from using Chromebook and Let's Read. Additionally, a significant number		
		of students expressed increased motivation to read and explore illustrated stories		
		after using Chromebook and Let's Read.		
3	Interaction	All students responded positively to the interactive stories in the Let's Read		
	with Stories	application, highlighting its effectiveness in enhancing their understanding. They		
		unanimously found the interactive features helpful in improving their		
		comprehension of the stories.		

From Table 2, student interactions with illustrated stories in the Let's Read application appeared to provide a positive experience. The interactive features were deemed helpful in enhancing students' understanding of the stories, and students generally welcomed the use of technology in learning. Some students highlighted specific moments in the stories that elicited particularly positive emotional reactions, reinforcing the positive impact of using this application. The synthesis of the interviews with three teachers is presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Summary of Teacher Interviews

No	Aspects	Description	
1	Teacher	Teachers observed improved student engagement when using Chromebook and	
	Observation		

No	Aspects	Description		
2	Impact on	Teachers reported a positive impact on students' reading interest from using		
	Reading	Chromebook and Let's Read, noting increased motivation to read and explore		
	Interest	illustrated stories. They found the interactive features of Let's Read beneficial in		
		enhancing students' understanding of the stories and maintaining their		
		engagement. Additionally, teachers observed that students had positive emotional		
		reactions to specific moments in the stories, further reinforcing the application's		
		positive impact on their learning experience.		
3	Challenges	Teachers acknowledged challenges in integrating technology into teaching,		
	Faced and	including technical issues and the need to adapt teaching methods. To address		
	Solutions	these challenges, they provided technical support to students and explored new		
	teaching strategies, demonstrating their commitment to overcoming obs			
		enhancing the learning experience.		

Base on Table 3, in the teachers' interviews, teachers consistently emphasized the positive impact of integrating technology, specifically Chromebook and Let's Read, into their teaching practices. They observed a significant improvement in student engagement, noting effective collaboration among students that created a supportive and interactive learning environment. This collaboration not only enhanced students' learning experiences but also encouraged peer interaction, fostering a sense of community and teamwork among students. Teachers also reported a positive impact on students' reading interest from using Chromebook and Let's Read. They noticed increased motivation to read and explore illustrated stories, attributed to the interactive features of the application. These features were found to be beneficial in enhancing students' understanding of the stories and maintaining their engagement throughout the reading process. Additionally, teachers observed positive emotional reactions from students, indicating a deeper connection and engagement with the content. This further reinforced the application's positive impact on students' reading interest and overall learning experience. Despite these positive outcomes, teachers acknowledged challenges in integrating technology into their teaching, such as technical issues and the need to adapt teaching methods. To address these challenges, teachers provided technical support to students and explored new teaching strategies. This demonstrated their commitment to overcoming obstacles and enhancing the learning experience through the integration of technology. Overall, the interviews highlighted the transformative impact of technology on student engagement, reading interest, and learning outcomes, emphasizing the importance of continued integration of technology in education. The results of the document analysis regarding the implementation of Chromebook and Let's Read at SDN Perdopo 02 and SDN Sidomulyo 02 are summarized in Table 4.

No	Category	Week 1	Week 2
1	Student-Chromebook	Positive trend with significant	Continuity of positive trend
	Interaction	instances	
2	Student Engagement	Consistent enthusiasm and	Continued positive engagement
	with Let's Read	positive engagement	
3	Concentration and	Lack of concentration and focus	Sustained concentration and
	Learning Focus		focus
4	Student-Teacher	Substantial positive interaction	Persistent positive interaction
	Interaction	recorded	
5	Utilization of Let's	Consistent positive outcomes,	Increased utilization, positive
	Read Features	increase in instances	outcomes
6	Negative Responses	Isolated instances noted,	Minimal negative responses,
		particularly in certain categories	overall positive outcomes
7	Understanding the	Limited understanding and	Improved understanding and
	stories being read	engagement	engagement

Table 4. Summary of Document Analysis Results

Base on Table 4, in Week 1, there was a positive trend in student interaction with Chromebook, with significant instances of engagement. This trend continued in Week 2, showing continuity in positive interactions. Student engagement with Let's Read was consistently enthusiastic in both weeks, indicating continued positive engagement. However, there was a notable improvement in concentration and learning focus from Week 1 to Week 2, with students showing sustained concentration and focus in Week 2 compared to a lack of focus in Week 1.

The analysis also revealed substantial positive interaction between students and teachers, which was recorded persistently across both weeks. The utilization of Let's Read features showed consistent positive outcomes, with an increase in instances of feature utilization from Week 1 to Week 2, indicating positive outcomes in both weeks. Additionally, while there were isolated instances of negative responses, particularly in certain categories, the overall trend showed minimal negative responses and mostly positive outcomes. Finally, understanding of the stories being read improved from Week 1 to Week 2, with students showing improved understanding and engagement with the stories in Week 2 compared to limited understanding and engagement in Week 1.



Figure 4. The Students' Engagement in Reading Activities Using Let's Read with Chromebook

These findings suggest that while technology integration has positive outcomes, addressing variations in student responses and enhancing participation remain key challenges for achieving more balanced benefits from Chromebook and the Let's Read application in these educational settings.

Discussion

The integration of technology, such as Chromebook and the Let's Read platform, in modern learning environments has become increasingly essential. Technology plays a pivotal role in supporting various activities, including education. This reliance on technology has shown to enhance students' understanding, further emphasizing the crucial role of technology in cultivating students' reading interest and involvement in the learning process (Carstens et al., 2021; Henderson, 2020). Comparing the research findings with previous studies, the positive impact of technology on students' performance and reading interest is evident. Technology tools like Chromebook and Let's Read have been shown to effectively enhance conceptual understanding and academic achievement (Abuhassna et al., 2020; Kozlova & Pikhart, 2021). Additionally, previous studies have shown the Let's Read application's significant influence on reading literacy skills, providing various benefits such as boosting self-assurance and enhancing vocabulary. Furthermore, the effective integration of Chromebook technology into lessons resulted in a notable increase in student engagement and motivation (Albataineh et al., 2024; Ambo et al., 2024).

The increase in student participation with the integration of technology, as observed in this study, is a crucial indicator of success. Other studies have also demonstrated that effective technology integration leads to increased student engagement and motivation (Bond & Bedenlier, 2019; Serrano et al., 2019). However, it is essential to note that some students may require a more personalized approach to achieve optimal participation levels. The use of technology can also enhance social interaction in the classroom, highlighting its potential as a catalyst for collaboration (Ashraf et al., 2017; Cavinato et al., 2021).

The results of this research provide a solid foundation for enhancing technology use in elementary education. Recommendations include a more focused approach to student preferences and increased social collaboration. Addressing challenges such as curriculum adjustments and access disparities is also crucial for sustainable technology integration (Caldevilla-Domínguez et al., 2021; Tohara, 2021). Despite the positive outcomes, challenges remain, such as maintaining student focus and ensuring technology is used wisely. Addressing these challenges will help optimize the positive outcomes of technology integration (Sofyan et al., 2022; Szymkowiak et al., 2021).

In conclusion, continued development of learning strategies that harness technology's potential while maintaining the essence of reading is essential. This will ensure education remains a driving force for transformation, equipping students with the skills needed for an increasingly complex future. This research has some limitations that need attention. Firstly, the research sample is limited to two schools, so the generalization of findings needs to be done carefully. Secondly, time constraints pose a limitation in this study, so observations may not cover the entire desired time range. It is important to continue exploring ways to enhance participation and engagement to maximize the benefits of Chromebook and Let's Read in

these educational settings. Overall, the use of technology, such as Chromebook and the Let's Read application, holds promise as an effective tool for enhancing reading interest among students in Indonesia, and continued efforts to address challenges and refine the integration of technology in education will be key to realizing its full potential in improving learning outcomes and student engagement.

4. CONCLUSION

The use of Chromebook and the Let's Read application has demonstrated a positive impact on student engagement and reading interest in elementary education. Students have shown high levels of engagement and enthusiasm in using the interactive features of the Let's Read application, and their emotional responses to the stories have been predominantly positive, with specific moments eliciting particularly strong reactions. Despite these positive outcomes, challenges remain in addressing variations in student responses and ensuring equitable distribution of benefits across all students at SDN Perdopo 02 and SDN Sidomulyo 02.

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