

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF LET'S READ APPLICATION TOWARD STUDENTS' LITERACY

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<p>ARTICLE INFO</p> <p>Article history: Received June 24, 2024 Revised July 04, 2024 Accepted July 16, 2024 Available online July 16, 2024</p> <p>Keywords: Let's Read, Literacy Skill, Learning Technology, Young Learners</p> <p><small>This is an open access article under the CC BY-SA license. Copyright © 2024 by Author. Published by Universitas Pendidikan Ganesha.</small></p>	<p>ABSTRACT</p> <p>This study examines the effects of the <i>Let's Read</i> application on the English literacy of seventh-grade students, particularly young learners at SMPN 1 Petang. The research employs statistical analysis to compare students' literacy skills in the experimental group, who use the <i>Let's Read</i> application, with those in the control group, who engage in conventional learning methods. The sample consists of 31 seventh-grade students from SMPN 1 Petang in Badung. The objective is to determine whether the use of the <i>Let's Read</i> application has a significant impact on their English literacy skills. The results indicate a substantial score difference between the experimental and control groups. An Independent Sample t-test was used to analyze the data, revealing that the one-sided and two-sided p-values were 0.1, less than the standard alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, it demonstrates that the <i>Let's Read</i> application significantly affects the English literacy skills of students at SMPN 1 Petang in Badung.</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Literacy encompasses the ability to read and write and effectively use technology. In today's technological era, literacy has evolved to include digital literacy, which involves using various digital technologies to gather and share information (Pilgrim & Martinez, 2013). Literacy now includes linguistic competence, which requires cognitive skills, knowledge of different genres, and cultural awareness (Sumarni & Sri Kuswardani, 2019). A comprehensive understanding of literacy skills is crucial for children's language development and acquisition (Kartikarini, 2020). Introducing reading skills early in the school curriculum is essential for student success, as literacy is considered a key competency (Padmadewi et al., 2018).

Students often face challenges in mastering English, and teachers encounter obstacles, especially in the current era. Success in 21st-century education depends on communication, information processing, problem-solving, adaptability, and solution-finding skills (Zubaidah, 2016). Teachers need to master these areas to support students' growth. The rapid advancement of technology has transformed daily tasks and impacts all activities (Kumar Kc et al., 2018). Integrating technology into education enhances teaching and learning. Educators are updating their instructional strategies and classroom setups to leverage technology and bridge the gap between current and future learning needs (Ratheeswari, 2018).

Educational institutions should prioritize enhancing students' English literacy, given its importance in modern education for developing critical thinking skills. At SMPN 1 Petang Badung, there are concerns about students' literacy skills. The *Let's Read* application offers a potential solution to improve English literacy. This multimedia platform combines engaging visuals, immersive storytelling, and audio elements to deepen students' understanding and foster a love of learning (Ermerawati, 2019). Educators can access a broader range of instructional resources by adopting this approach. This study aims to explore the features of the *Let's Read* application and evaluate its potential benefits. Therefore, the focus is to examine the impact of the *Let's Read* application on junior high school students' literacy skills.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Concept of Literacy

Literacy, encompassing reading and writing skills, is essential for students' intellectual development and social communication (Musyaffa, 2021; Padmadewi et al., 2022). It underpins the effective exchange and comprehension of information, which is critical in navigating a globalized world (UNESCO, 2020). Literacy enhances critical thinking, problem-solving, and societal participation (National et al., 2019). Proficiency in English literacy, particularly in reading comprehension and writing, is crucial for students'

academic success and future competitiveness (Baker, 2018). Developing these skills through focused activities equips students with the necessary tools for leadership and global engagement, fostering effective communication and collaboration across borders (Richards, 2015; OECD, 2019). Moreover, literacy contributes to lifelong learning and personal empowerment, enabling individuals to access information, exercise their rights, and make informed decisions (Freire, 1970). Integrating technology with literacy instruction further supports personalized learning, engagement, and skill development, which is essential in the digital age (Ali & Ahmad, 2018; García-Peñalvo et al., 2018).

2.2 Learning Technology

Technology is vital in modern education, enhancing learning engagement and practicality (Ali & Ahmad, 2018; García-Peñalvo et al., 2018). It supports personalized learning experiences, boosting student engagement, motivation, and retention (Means et al., 2013). Educational technology includes multimedia tools, e-books, learning management systems, augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR), online collaboration platforms, mobile apps, and gamification (Hwang & Wu, 2012; Johnson et al., 2016). These tools facilitate interactive and dynamic learning environments, encouraging active student participation and improving educational outcomes (Mayer, 2009; Dichev & Dicheva, 2017). Integrating technology in education also allows for real-time feedback, adaptive learning paths, and access to diverse resources, making education more accessible and effective (Veletsianos, 2010; Selwyn, 2016). Furthermore, technology in education can bridge gaps in access to quality education, particularly in remote or under-resourced areas (Anderson & Rivera-Vargas, 2020). As the digital age progresses, incorporating these technological tools is essential for preparing students to meet the demands of the 21st century (García-Peñalvo et al., 2018).

2.3 Learning Media

Learning media includes physical and digital resources that educators use to deliver content (Puspitarini & Hanif, 2019) effectively. These tools help tailor the learning experience to meet individual student needs and comprehension levels (Ani Daniyati et al., 2023). Various types of learning media, such as visual, interactive, digital, audio, and print, are utilized in education (Al Rashid et al., 2023). Visual media, like photos, diagrams, and videos, enhance understanding and memory. Interactive media, such as educational games and online platforms, engage students actively and provide immediate feedback. Digital media, including e-books and online courses, offer flexibility and accessibility. Audio media, like podcasts and language programs, use sound to convey information. Print media includes traditional textbooks and worksheets. These diverse learning tools are crucial for sparking curiosity, maintaining attention, and motivating students to learn.

2.4 *Let's Read* Application

Numerous learning applications can enhance student interest in reading, particularly the *Let's Read* application. This digital book platform offers children's stories in various languages, including English, Bahasa Indonesia, and Balinese. The stories, ranging from folktales to contemporary narratives, are enriched with engaging features like narration and vivid illustrations. The app categorizes content by reading levels, allowing students to select stories appropriate to their skill and progress to more challenging texts. The captivating illustrations make reading enjoyable, helping to improve literacy skills, especially in reading (Ananta et al., 2022). The *Let's Read* app mainly benefits Asian students, enhancing reading comprehension and critical thinking in areas with limited book access (Astuti & Maftukhah, 2021). Its adaptable nature allows students to choose materials aligned with their learning goals and interests. Teachers can integrate this tool into classrooms by preparing lessons, introducing the app, conducting interactive reading sessions, and evaluating through post-tests. This method, contrasting with traditional printed texts, offers a dynamic and interactive reading experience through engaging visuals and audio. Comparing outcomes between students using the *Let's Read* application and those using conventional methods highlights the benefits and challenges of incorporating technology into literacy education.

2.5 Empirical Review

Numerous studies have investigated the impact of the *Let's Read* application and other digital literacy tools on students' literacy skills. Ermerawati (2019) found that integrating the *Let's Read* application with Mobile-Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and Task-Based Learning (TBL) significantly influenced students' reading comprehension, vocabulary, and motivation. Similarly, Prihartono (2021) showed that the application enhanced motivation and understanding in online extensive reading practices among Indonesian EFL learners. Grames (2020) reported improved literacy skills and increased interest in reading

among students using the Let's Read application during the pandemic. Additionally, Siregar et al. (2022) demonstrated that combining the Let's Read application with hand puppets significantly impacted storytelling skills and engagement in fourth graders.

Further studies highlight the application's broader educational impact. Maesyaroh (2022) found that digital literacy instruction via Let's Read significantly influenced early childhood literacy and engagement. Pitri & Sofia (2022) identified critical factors for enhancing reading literacy in Indonesia, such as motivation and the availability of reading materials. Farhani et al. (2022) reported positive parental perceptions of the Let's Read digital library, though some parents desired more interactive features. Yuliani (2022) assessed the application's usability, finding high ratings in utility and satisfaction among early childhood education teachers. Rodeghiero et al. (2021) explored the application's potential to support spoken language learning for Children of Deaf Adults (CODAs), while Maruti (2022) demonstrated its effectiveness in impacting children's digital literacy during the pandemic, offering a diverse linguistic experience.

This study evaluates the effectiveness of the Let's Read application on Grade 7 students' English proficiency at SMPN 1 Petang, addressing their need for reading and writing skills. Utilizing a quasi-experimental design, it compares literacy outcomes between students using Let's Read and those employing traditional methods. Unlike previous research, which often focused on younger children and used descriptive designs, this study targets junior high students and uses a quasi-experimental approach for a more objective assessment. Prior studies, like those by Ermerawati (2019) and Prihartono (2021), have shown positive impacts on reading comprehension and motivation, supporting the potential benefits of Let's Read for this demographic.

3. METHOD

This study utilizes a quantitative methodology with an experimental design, explicitly employing a quasi-experimental technique, to evaluate the influence of the *Let's Read* application on the English language ability of Grade 7 students at SMPN 1 Petang. This study is quasi-experimental and includes both experimental and control groups. The experimental group employs the *Let's Read* application, while the control group adheres to conventional teaching methods without intervention. As described by Stoufer (1950) and Campbell (1957), quasi-studies consist of treatment, effect measurement, and experimental units. These experiments utilize specific non-random assignments to compare changes caused by the treatment. This study employs a control group design with a single post-test, randomly assigning participants to experimental or control groups. Therefore, the learning activities and assessments prioritize enhancing students' reading and writing skills to improve their English literacy.

The research was conducted at SMPN 1 Petang in Petang, Badung, focusing on seventh-grade students in Grade VII B. Despite having rudimentary English reading and writing abilities, many kids require additional improvement. These pupils possess the necessary media and technical resources to enable the *Let's Read* application, making them highly suitable candidates for this study.

Throughout the process of data collecting, the researcher took on multiple roles, including study designer, data collector, and findings reporter. Several instrument designs were created to assist in the collection of data. This study utilized a single post-test comprising 30 multiple-choice questions given to both the experimental and control groups upon course completion. The post-test was conducted to assess the efficacy of the *Let's Read* application. Before the post-test, a preliminary test was administered in different classrooms to authenticate the questions. The procedure involved evaluating the test's accuracy and consistency by considering its content and empirical validity. It was done by applying Gregory's formula and seeking expert opinions to assess whether or not the test design was appropriate for the experiment.

$$\text{Content Validity} = \frac{D}{A+B+C+D}$$

Figure 1. Gregory Formula

- A : Disagreement between the expert judges
- B & C : Different agreement between the expert judges
- D : Agreement between the expert judges

Table 1. Cross Tabulation Try-out Test

		Judge II	
		Relevant	Irrelevant
Judge I	Relevant		
	Irrelevant		

Before delivering the try-out test, a group of specialists assesses the suitability of the questions for evaluating student performance. Validity is a measure of how accurate an instrument is, and an instrument with high validity has a high validity score (Arikunto, 2010).

Table 2. Question Validity Criteria

Content validity	Level
0.8 – 1.0	Very high
0.6 – 0.79	High
0.4 – 0.59	Sufficient
0.2 – 0.39	Low
0.0 – 0.19	Very Low

$$\text{Content Validity} = \frac{30}{0+0+0+30} = 1$$

Figure 2. Gregory Formula

Applying Gregory's technique, the findings demonstrated that every item was pertinent, attaining a content validity score of 1.0. It has a remarkably elevated degree of topic validity, rendering the items appropriate for assessment with students from different classes, particularly Class VII C at SMPN 1 Petang. A total of 31 students took part in the tryout exam.

Once the author verified that the tryout test was suitable, they conducted it on 31 pupils in Class VIIB. Afterward, the accuracy of the tryout test findings was assessed by examining the connection between individual scores and the overall scores. Anates V4, a software application designed to evaluate the accuracy and consistency of multiple-choice questions, was used to evaluate the data (Arif, 2014). The significance of each component is displayed in Table 3.

Table 3. Processed results of correlation and significance of each item

No. of items	Correlation	Significance
1	0.621	Very Significant
2	0.642	Very Significant
3	0.378	Significant
4	0.588	Very Significant
5	0.568	Very Significant
6	0.621	Very Significant
7	0.476	Very Significant
8	0.413	Significant
9	0.513	Very Significant
10	0.399	Significant
11	0.491	Very Significant
12	0.762	Very Significant
13	0.762	Very Significant
14	0.611	Very Significant
15	0.741	Very Significant

16	0.676	Very Significant
17	0.501	Very Significant
18	0.731	Very Significant
19	0.571	Very Significant
20	0.690	Very Significant
21	0.568	Very Significant
22	0.747	Very Significant
23	0.381	Significant
24	0.414	Significant
25	0.781	Very Significant
26	0.439	Significant
27	0.416	Significant
28	0.351	Significant
29	0.399	Significant
30	0.813	Very Significant

Table 4. The Significance limit of the correlation coefficient

df (N-2)	p=0.05	p=0.01	df (N-2)	p=0.05	p=0.01
10	0.576	0.708	60	0.250	0.325
15	0.482	0.606	70	0.233	0.302
20	0.423	0.549	80	0.217	0.283
25	0.381	0.496	90	0.205	0.267
30	0.349	0.449	100	0.195	0.254
40	0.304	0.393	125	0.174	0.228
50	0.273	0.354	>150	0.159	0.208

If the coefficient = 0.000 means it cannot be calculated.

The analytical findings revealed that all items had correlation values over 0.349, signifying their substantial association with the overall score and verifying its validity. The researcher utilized Anates V4 to evaluate the dependability of the goods in this investigation. Later, the subsequent data was acquired.

Mean = 23.48
Standard Deviation= 6.13
XY Correlation = 0.83
Test Reliability = 0.91

Table 5. Reliability scales

Range	Scale
0.00 – 0.399	Low
0.40 – 0.599	Medium
0.60 – 0.799	Strong
0.80 – 1.00	Very Strong

The data analysis revealed a reliability coefficient of 0.91 for the test, indicating a very strong level of dependability for the 30 test items. Hence, these items are appropriate and reliable for administering the post-test to the experimental and control groups following the therapy.

This study utilized the t-test to evaluate the effects of literacy skills in sixth-grade students at SMPN 1 Petang. The Independent T-test was employed to assess the statistical significance of the data and confirm the study hypothesis for the experimental and control groups. The Independent T-test analysis was conducted using SPSS 29 software. The specific requirements for the hypothesis are outlined in the table below:

The study used effect size to evaluate the efficacy of the *Let's Read* application in the experimental group. Cohen's formula is employed to compute the effect size. The table below displays the categories of Cohen's impact size.

$$\text{Cohen's } d = \frac{\text{Experimental Group Mean} - \text{Control Group Mean}}{\text{Standard Deviation}}$$

Figure 4. Cohen's Effect Size Formula

Table 6. Cohen's Effect Size

Effect size (d)	Level
0 - 0.2	Weak Effect
0.21 - 0.50	Modest Effect
0.51 - 1.00	Moderate Effect
> 1.00	Strong Effect

4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Result

The post-test was administered to both the Experimental Group and the Control Group to assess the performance of students who received instruction through the *Let's Read* application and those taught using conventional techniques. The post-test was conducted on May 3rd, 2024, after implementing conventional and the *Let's Read* application teaching methods. To compare the Experimental and Control groups, students take a 40-minute test session with 30 questions.

Table 7. Post-test Score

No	Subjects	Experimental Group	Control Group
1	Student 1	100	70
2	Student 2	93	100
3	Student 3	96	86
4	Student 4	86	80
5	Student 5	96	83
6	Student 6	96	90
7	Student 7	96	80
8	Student 8	100	84
9	Student 9	96	86
10	Student 10	96	90
11	Student 11	86	80
12	Student 12	96	78
13	Student 13	86	80
14	Student 14	100	80
15	Student 15	93	86
16	Student 16	93	66
17	Student 17	86	80
18	Student 18	96	83
19	Student 19	86	78
20	Student 20	86	73
21	Student 21	96	73
22	Student 22	76	80
23	Student 23	96	76
24	Student 24	76	70
25	Student 25	96	86
26	Student 26	93	83
27	Student 27	78	96
28	Student 28	93	76
29	Student 29	86	80
30	Student 30	78	80

31	Student 31	83	76
	Mean	90.77	80.94

4.1.1 Normality Test

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was employed in this work to assess the conformity of the data to a normal distribution. The data follows a normal distribution if the test result (value) is higher than 0.05. On the other hand, a number below 0.05 suggests that the data may not follow a normal distribution. The results of this test for normalcy are displayed in a table:

Table 8. Normality Test

	Class	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
		Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Post-test Results	Exp Class	.131	31	.185*	.932	31	.049
	Control Class	.126	31	.200	.970	31	.525

The test findings indicate that the experimental class has a significant value of 0.185, whereas the control class has a substantial value of 0.200. The findings of both classes exhibit a normal distribution, and the p-value exceeds 0.05.

4.1.2 Homogeneity

In addition to examining normal distribution, this study also evaluated the homogeneity of the data from both the experimental and control groups. An inferential statistical analysis was performed using the SPSS software to analyze the post-test data. Typically, a score greater than 0.05 suggests that the data is homogeneous. The outcomes of this homogeneity test are displayed in Table 9.

Table 9. Homogeneity Test

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Hasil post-test	Based on Mean	.083	1	60	.774
	Based on Median	.074	1	60	.787
	Based on the Median and with adjusted df	.074	1	56.521	.787
	Based on trimmed mean	.077	1	60	.782

According to Table 9, the data is considered homogeneous if the result of the homogeneity test is greater than 0.05. The data test yielded a value of 0.774, indicating a significant level of homogeneity. Homogeneity can be inferred based on the mean.

4.1.3 T-test

The researcher used an Independent T-test to compare and assess two separate groups. Before conducting this test, they evaluated the normality and homogeneity of the data. They assessed the null hypothesis's acceptance using SPSS 29 software. If the computed 'significance' level (p-value) exceeds the standard alpha level (0.05), they retain the null hypothesis, suggesting no significant difference between the groups. Conversely, they discard the null hypothesis when the p-value is smaller than the alpha threshold, indicating a statistically significant distinction between the groups. They set the significance threshold for this study at 0.05.

Table 10. Independent Sample T-test

		F	Sig.	t	df	Significance	
						One-sided p	Two-sided p
Hasil Post-test	Equal Variances Assumed	0.083	0.774	5.118	60	0.001	0.001

Equal variances not assumed	3.930	56.407	0.001	0.001
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Table 10 indicates that the values for (sig. One-Sided p) and (Two-Sided p) are 0.001. It signifies the p-value below the standard alpha level ($\alpha = 0.05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) is rejected, and the alternative hypothesis (H_a) is embraced. The *Let's Read* Application considerably impacts the English literacy of students at SMP Negeri 1 Petang, Badung, resulting in a certain conclusion.

4.1.4 Effect Size

The study analyzes the impact of the *Let's Read* application on pupils' English literacy. This study utilizes Cohen's method (Fritz et al., 2012) to measure and quantify the impact of this effect. This formula computes the correlation between the average score and the variability of the post-test scores in both the experimental and control groups. The table below displays the effect sizes obtained from the results.

X 1	= 80.26
S1	= 7.823
X 2	= 89.81
S2	= 6.833
Cohen's d	= 1.300257

- X 1 : Control group Post-test mean
- S1 : Control Group Post-test Standard Deviation
- X 2 : Experimental Group Post-test Mean
- S2 : Experimental Group Post-test Standard Deviation

The test yielded a score of 1.300257, beyond the threshold of 1.0, indicating a 'strong effect.' The *Let's Read* application substantially benefited the English literacy skills of 7th-grade pupils at SMPN 1 Petang.

4.2 Discussion

This study examines the impact of the *Let's Read* application on seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Petang. The data collected demonstrates that the *Let's Read* application significantly affects students' literacy by presenting captivating and comprehensible material. Several students provided feedback on the application's design, expressing that it is straightforward and beneficial. This is consistent with the findings of Ermerawati (2019), which suggest that digital tools support reading abilities. Farhani et al. (2022) also found that these programs greatly enhance students' vocabulary. Dewi et al. (2018) emphasized the importance of early reading introduction to developing future communication skills.

Among the many tools available to boost student motivation and learning, the *Let's Read* application stands out. This study examines the impact of the *Let's Read* application on seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Petang. The data collected demonstrates that the *Let's Read* application significantly affects students' literacy by presenting captivating and comprehensible material. Students engaged in activities like reading stories, predicting plots from pictures, and practising pronunciation with audio from the application. The results indicated a positive impact on learning, aligning with previous studies that highlighted the benefits of *Let's Read*.

Students showed enthusiasm and engagement, finding the app's images and customizable reading levels appealing. Despite occasional internet issues, students remained focused and performed well in post-tests. The data suggested that *Let's Read* increased engagement and positively impacted reading and writing skills. The experimental group using the app achieved higher scores than the control group, demonstrating the potential of digital tools like *Let's Read* to enhance traditional literacy instruction. The findings of this study underscore the efficacy of digital learning tools in improving conventional literacy instruction and positively impacting student performance. The experimental group using the app achieved an average score of 88.06, compared to the control group's average score of 80.06, demonstrating the substantial positive impact of the *Let's Read* application on students' literacy achievements.

5. CONCLUSION

Upon examining the effects of the *Let's Read* application on the English literacy skills of seventh-grade students at SMPN 1 Petang, researchers observed significant disparities in student achievement when comparing conventional learning approaches (involving actual books) to the utilization of the *Let's Read*

application. The experimental group benefited from the advantages of the application, which allowed teachers to customize the themes and create a captivating literacy learning environment. The results indicated a notable and favorable impact, as the group that utilized the *Let's Read* program demonstrated superior literacy abilities compared to the control group that relied on conventional approaches. The *Let's Read* application can have effective English literacy among young learners.

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