

The Use of Picture Story Media to Enhance Reading Interest of Third-Grade Students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang

Nurlina

nurlinacica5@gmail.com

Suardi Zain

suardizain1@gmail.com

Nurzin R Kasau

nurzinxter@gmail.com

Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidenreng Rappang

ABSTRACT

Reading interest among elementary school students remains a challenge, particularly when students are less enthusiastic about literacy activities and are more attracted to entertainment-based activities. This study investigated the effectiveness of picture stories in improving reading interest among third-grade students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang. The study employed a quantitative approach using a one-group pre-test–post-test design. Data were collected through reading interest questionnaires, observation, and documentation. The treatment involved structured reading activities using picture stories for 10–15 minutes before learning activities, followed by discussion and sharing of story content. The findings indicated an improvement in students' reading interest after the implementation of picture stories. The increase was reflected in students' attention, participation, enthusiasm, and willingness to continue reading activities. The study concludes that picture stories are an effective instructional medium for supporting literacy development in elementary schools.

Keywords: Picture Stories; Reading Interest; Literacy; Elementary School Students; Reading Activities

INTRODUCTION

Reading is one of the fundamental skills that plays an essential role in the educational process, particularly at the elementary school level. Reading ability is not only related to mastering letters and words but also contributes significantly to developing students' thinking skills, understanding information, expanding knowledge, and building character. Through reading activities, students can acquire new knowledge, enrich their vocabulary, and develop their imagination and critical thinking skills. Therefore, reading interest needs to be cultivated from an early age so that students become accustomed to considering reading as a necessity rather than merely an obligation.

However, in reality, students' reading interest at the elementary school level remains relatively low. Many students are less interested in reading books, particularly textbooks or educational reading materials. They tend to prefer visual and entertainment-based activities, such as using gadgets, watching videos, or playing games. This condition presents a challenge for teachers in developing a literacy culture in schools. If reading interest is not fostered from an early age, it may affect students' ability to comprehend learning materials and negatively influence their academic achievement.

Based on initial observations at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang, particularly among third-grade students, several problems related to reading interest were identified. Some students showed limited enthusiasm during reading activities, lacked concentration when asked to read texts, and were less active in responding to reading content. This condition was reflected in the low participation of students during literacy activities and their limited willingness to read independently. Therefore, an engaging learning strategy that is appropriate to the characteristics of elementary school students is needed.

One effort that can be implemented to improve students' reading interest is the use of attractive learning media, particularly picture stories. Picture stories are reading materials that combine texts with engaging and colorful illustrations. The presence of images in stories can help students understand reading content, stimulate curiosity, and increase their motivation to read. For elementary school students, especially those in lower grades, pictures play an important role because they help students visualize stories and comprehend story sequences more easily.

The use of picture stories in learning activities is considered effective because it aligns with the cognitive development characteristics of elementary school children, who are still in the concrete operational stage. At this stage, children can understand information more easily when it is presented through visual and concrete representations. Picture stories function not only as reading materials but also as learning media that can stimulate imagination, improve concentration, and develop students' language skills. Through attractive visual presentations, picture stories can create an enjoyable learning environment, allowing students to engage in reading activities without feeling forced.

Furthermore, picture stories can also serve as a medium for instilling moral, social, and character values among students. Through characters and storylines, students can learn values such as honesty, discipline, responsibility, and mutual respect. Thus, the use of picture stories contributes not only to improving reading interest but also to supporting students' character development. In the context of learning at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang, the use of picture stories is expected to become a solution for addressing the low reading interest of third-grade students. Through planned and continuous picture story reading activities, students are expected to become more interested in reading, more actively involved in literacy activities, and better able to comprehend reading materials. Teachers can also utilize picture

stories as a means of creating interactive learning activities, such as shared reading, story discussions, and retelling activities.

Based on the explanation above, it is necessary to conduct research on the use of picture stories in improving the reading interest of third-grade students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang. This research is expected to provide a clear description of the effect of picture stories on students' reading interest and serve as a reference for teachers in selecting appropriate learning media. In addition, the findings of this study are expected to provide consideration for schools in developing more effective and engaging literacy programs for students.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Reading Interest

Reading interest refers to an individual's tendency or desire to engage in reading activities voluntarily and continuously. Reading interest does not develop instantly; rather, it grows through habituation processes and enjoyable reading experiences. Individuals with high reading interest tend to demonstrate enthusiasm, curiosity, and willingness to spend time reading without being forced. At the elementary school level, reading interest plays a crucial role because it serves as a foundation for students' learning success at subsequent educational levels. Children who enjoy reading will find it easier to understand learning materials, possess a broader vocabulary, and develop critical and creative thinking skills. Conversely, low reading interest may lead to limited comprehension of learning materials and negatively affect students' learning outcomes. Reading interest is influenced by several factors, including internal and external factors. Internal factors include motivation, attention, and children's mental readiness. Meanwhile, external factors involve family and school environments, the availability of reading materials, and the teaching methods and learning media used by teachers. Therefore, teachers play an important role in creating a learning environment that can foster students' reading interest through the selection of appropriate strategies and media.

Picture Stories

Picture stories are reading materials that combine texts with related illustrations to convey a story. The images in picture stories function to clarify the content of the story, attract readers' attention, and assist readers in understanding the storyline and messages conveyed. Picture stories generally use simple language and easily understandable story structures, making them highly suitable for elementary school-aged children. In learning activities, picture stories have several advantages, including: (1) attracting students' attention, (2) improving imagination, (3) facilitating comprehension of reading content, and (4) creating an enjoyable learning atmosphere. In addition, picture stories can also be used as a medium for instilling moral, social, and character values through the characters and events presented in the stories.

The use of picture stories is also consistent with the cognitive development characteristics of elementary school children, who are still at the concrete operational stage. At this stage, children can understand information more easily when it is presented visually and concretely. Therefore, the presence of images in reading materials can help children connect texts with meanings more effectively.

Reading Interest of Elementary School Students

Elementary school students have unique characteristics, including enjoying play activities, being attracted to visually appealing materials, and having relatively short attention spans. Therefore, learning activities that are monotonous and lack variation tend to make students bored easily. In the context of reading, students are generally more interested in reading materials that contain attractive pictures, colors, and engaging stories compared to long texts without illustrations. Students' reading interest can be improved through various strategies, such as reading habituation, providing age-appropriate reading materials, utilizing attractive learning media, and receiving support from teachers and the school environment. Regular literacy activities, such as reading before lessons begin, can also help develop students' reading habits.

The Use of Picture Stories in Improving Reading Interest

The use of picture stories in learning activities has been proven to improve students' reading interest. Picture stories make reading activities more enjoyable and less monotonous. Students become more interested in reading because of attractive illustrations and easily understandable stories. Furthermore, picture stories can increase students' active participation in learning activities, such as asking questions, retelling story content, and engaging in discussions. In the context of elementary school learning, picture stories can be used as supporting media for literacy activities and thematic learning. Teachers can utilize picture stories as introductory reading materials, discussion materials, or as a medium for strengthening learning content. Therefore, the use of picture stories not only improves reading interest but also supports students' comprehension and learning outcomes. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that picture stories are an effective medium for improving elementary school students' reading interest. Therefore, the implementation of picture stories in third-grade learning at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang is expected to significantly enhance students' reading interest and create a more active and enjoyable learning environment.

METHOD

Design and Sample

This study employed a quantitative approach using a quasi-experimental research design. The design applied was the One Group Pretest–Posttest Design, which involved a single group without a comparison group. This design was chosen to

measure the improvement of students' reading interest after receiving treatment through the use of picture stories. The students were given a pretest to determine their initial reading interest, followed by learning activities using picture stories, and finally a posttest to identify changes in their reading interest after the treatment. The research was conducted at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang, Bone Regency, Indonesia. The research site was selected based on preliminary observations indicating that the reading interest of third-grade students needed improvement. The study was carried out during the second semester of the academic year according to the school schedule. The sample of this study consisted of all third-grade students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang. The subjects were selected using total sampling, meaning that all students in the class participated in the research.

Instruments and Procedures

Data were collected through observation, questionnaires, and documentation. Observation was conducted to identify students' initial reading interest conditions and their participation during learning activities using picture stories. An observation sheet was used to record students' involvement during the treatment. The main instrument of this study was a reading interest questionnaire using a Likert scale. The questionnaire was administered before and after the treatment to measure students' reading interest. The indicators included enjoyment of reading, attention toward reading materials, interest in reading materials, and reading habits. Documentation was also used to support the research data, including student data, photographs of learning activities, and other relevant documents. Before being used, the questionnaire and observation sheet were validated to ensure the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the instrument items. The research procedure was conducted in three stages. First, the planning stage involved preparing the research instruments and picture story media. Second, the implementation stage included administering the pretest, conducting learning activities using picture stories, and administering the posttest. Third, the final evaluation stage involved processing the collected data, analyzing the results, and drawing conclusions regarding the effectiveness of picture stories in improving students' reading interest.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using quantitative descriptive analysis. The pretest and posttest questionnaire scores were calculated to determine the average level of students' reading interest before and after the implementation of picture stories. The improvement in reading interest was identified by comparing the differences between the pretest and posttest results. The analysis focused on describing the increase in students' reading interest after receiving the treatment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

This study was conducted to examine the effectiveness of using picture stories in improving students' reading interest through a one group pretest–posttest design.

Data collection was conducted twice, namely the initial test (pretest) before the treatment and the final test (posttest) after the treatment. The pretest was conducted on December 12, 2024, while the posttest was conducted on January 25, 2025.

The treatment implemented in this study involved a structured reading habituation activity using picture storybooks for 15 minutes before the learning process began. This activity was carried out repeatedly through several meetings to develop a consistent reading habit among students. In addition to reading activities, students were encouraged to share their reading experiences, such as mentioning the title of the book, characters, story summaries, and moral messages. This activity encouraged students not only to read but also to comprehend the content and express their understanding of the stories they read.

The measurement results showed an improvement in students' average reading interest scores after the implementation of picture stories. The average pretest score was 51.28%, while the average posttest score increased to 89.56%. The difference between the pretest and posttest scores was 38.28 points. These findings indicate that before the treatment, students' reading interest was relatively low, as reflected by the initial average score in the fifty-percent range. After the implementation of picture story reading activities, the score increased significantly, approaching ninety percent, indicating improved student interest and involvement in reading activities.

To determine the level of improvement proportionally, the pretest and posttest data were analyzed using the N-Gain calculation. The analysis resulted in an average N-Gain value of 0.79, equivalent to 78.98%. Based on the effectiveness criteria used in this study, the obtained N-Gain percentage was categorized as effective. Individual data also showed variations in improvement among students. The lowest N-Gain score was 55.56% (N-Gain = 0.56), while the highest reached 100% (N-Gain = 1.00). These findings indicate that although all students experienced improvement, the level of improvement varied due to differences in initial reading habits, environmental support, reading comprehension ability, and students' preferences toward story themes. Overall, the improvement demonstrates that the treatment contributed to increasing reading interest at the class level, as most posttest scores were within the high category range (80–100).

In addition to pretest and posttest results, the study was supported by observation data analyzed using a Likert scale. The overall observation results reached 83.8%, indicating positive student responses toward reading activities using picture stories. This percentage demonstrates that picture story media increased student involvement, attention, and enthusiasm during reading activities compared to their initial condition. Overall, the findings show that the use of picture stories had a strong impact on improving students' reading interest, supported by three main indicators: (1) an increase in average scores from 51.28% to 89.56%, (2) an effective N-Gain value of 78.98%, and (3) positive observation results reaching 83.8%.

The findings of this study indicate that students' reading interest improved significantly after the implementation of picture story media through structured reading habituation activities. The improvement was reflected not only in the quantitative scores but also in students' engagement during the learning process. The average pretest score increased from 51.28% to 89.56% in the posttest, with an average N-Gain value of 78.98%, which was categorized as effective. These findings support the idea that visual-based media and age-appropriate reading materials can serve as effective tools for developing reading interest among elementary school students.

Picture stories are effective because they combine textual information with illustrations, making reading activities more accessible and engaging for students. Elementary school children generally respond positively to visual stimuli. When illustrations support the storyline, students can understand the content more easily, predict story developments, and connect the reading materials with their own experiences. As a result, reading is no longer perceived as a difficult task but as an enjoyable activity. This condition encourages students to read independently, spend more time engaging with reading materials, and maintain better concentration during literacy activities. Furthermore, picture stories help reduce reading barriers among students who lack confidence or are not accustomed to reading long texts. Through illustrations, students can follow the storyline, understand the main ideas, and become motivated to complete the reading materials. This mechanism explains why students' posttest scores increased significantly after receiving the treatment.

Another important factor contributing to the effectiveness of the treatment was the consistent implementation of the 15-minute reading habituation strategy before learning activities. This routine encouraged students to consider reading as a normal part of classroom activities rather than an additional task. Through repeated practice, reading habits gradually became more structured and sustainable. The activity was also strengthened through follow-up activities, such as sharing reading experiences by presenting book titles, characters, summaries, and moral messages. These activities allowed students not only to read but also to process and communicate information from the texts, making reading experiences more meaningful. The increase in scores from 51.28% to 89.56% indicates a substantial improvement in students' reading interest. The relatively low initial score reflected limited reading enthusiasm, weak reading habits, and fewer enjoyable reading experiences. After the intervention, the significant increase in scores showed that students began to experience the benefits and enjoyment of reading. Based on the N-Gain analysis, the score of 78.98% indicates that picture stories effectively improved students' reading interest compared with their initial conditions.

Although the overall results showed effectiveness, individual student data revealed differences in improvement levels. Some students achieved an N-Gain score of 55.56%, while others reached 100%. This variation is understandable because reading interest is influenced by internal factors, such as motivation, previous reading habits, and self-confidence, as well as external factors, including family

support, access to reading materials, and peer environments. Nevertheless, all students showed positive development, indicating that the intervention successfully encouraged collective improvement rather than benefiting only certain students.

The observation results, which reached 83.8%, further strengthened the quantitative findings by showing positive student responses toward picture story-based reading activities. These responses were reflected in increased attention during reading, greater participation in sharing story content, and a more supportive classroom atmosphere for literacy activities. Therefore, the improvement in posttest scores was supported by observable behavioral changes throughout the treatment process. The findings imply that teachers can utilize picture stories as a regular medium in classroom literacy programs, particularly through short but consistent reading habituation strategies. The 15-minute reading activity before lessons is relatively easy to implement and does not interfere with the main learning process, while still providing a meaningful contribution to developing a reading culture. With the support of varied age-appropriate story themes and simple follow-up activities such as discussions or book reviews, students' reading interest can continue to develop sustainably.

CONCLUSION

The use of picture stories has been proven effective in improving the reading interest of third-grade students at UPT SD Negeri 1 Sereang. This effectiveness is reflected in the increase in students' reading interest scores before and after the treatment, where the average pretest score of 51.28% increased to 89.56% in the posttest. Furthermore, the N-Gain analysis result of 78.98% indicates that the improvement achieved was categorized as effective. The effectiveness of picture story media was demonstrated not only through quantitative results but also through changes in students' attitudes during the learning process. Students showed higher enthusiasm, better concentration during reading activities, and more active participation in literacy activities, such as retelling story content and engaging in discussions. The positive responses obtained from observation data further confirm that picture stories can make reading activities more attractive, enjoyable, and meaningful for students. Therefore, picture stories can be considered an appropriate literacy medium for developing reading habits in elementary schools, particularly among lower-grade students. Short but consistent reading habituation activities, accompanied by simple follow-up activities, can contribute to building a stronger reading culture in the classroom. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable input for teachers and schools in developing more creative, effective, and sustainable literacy programs.

REFERENCES

Agung, M., Putri, H. D., & Ainul, N. (2022). Multimedia interaktif model pembelajaran multibahasa untuk konsep pembelajaran bahasa daerah

- Sulawesi. *Jurnal PENA: Penelitian Dan Penalaran*, 9(2), 128–143. <https://doi.org/10.26618/jp.v9i2.8971>
- Alaudin, N., & Nurjanah, N. (2024). Efektivitas model pembelajaran berbasis kearifan lokal dalam meningkatkan motivasi belajar siswa. *PENDIRI: Jurnal Riset Pendidikan*, 1(2).
- Apriyani, R., Gloriani, Y., & Khaerudin, I. R. (2022). Model kontekstual berorientasi kearifan lokal pada materi cerita rakyat. *Jurnal Tuturan*, 11(1), 36–45. <https://doi.org/10.33393/jt.v11i1.6348>
- Aulia, T., Dewi, D. A., & Hayat, R. S. (2023). Penurunan pada eksistensi penggunaan bahasa daerah dalam interaksi generasi masa kini berkenaan dengan literasi kebudayaan. *JOUMI: Jurnal Multidisiplin Indonesia*, 1(3), 52–62.
- Elva Utami, Arono, Yunita, W., Safnil, Kencana, N., & Hermansyah, S. (2025). Indonesian students' perspectives on problem-based and multicultural learning in basic reading comprehension. *EduBase: Journal of Basic Education*, 6(1), 120–130. <https://journal.ljpi.bbc.ac.id/edubase/article/view/370>
- Fadli, I., & Fitrahwahyudi, F. (2019). Pemetaan bahasa daerah di Kabupaten Maros: Tinjauan sosiolinguistik. *Jurnal Idiomatik: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 2(2), 43–51.
- Gultom, C. A., Angin, E. P., Simamora, K. L., Gultom, O., Simarmata, S. E., & Banjarnahor, Y. (2025). Analisis dampak penggunaan bahasa daerah pada literasi bahasa Indonesia siswa di sekolah dasar. *Journal of Citizen Research and Development*, 2(1), 354–361. <https://doi.org/10.57235/jcrd.v2i1.4621>
- Hake, R. R. (1998). Interactive-engagement versus traditional methods: A six-thousand-student survey of mechanics test data for introductory physics courses. *American Journal of Physics*, 66(1), 64–74. <https://doi.org/10.1119/1.18809>
- Kaharuddin, K., Kaharuddin, M. N., & Kaharuddin, N. N. (2024). Penetrasi bahasa dan ancaman kepunahan bahasa daerah di era komunikasi digital di Provinsi Sulawesi Selatan. *Jurnal Idiomatik: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 7(1), 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.46918/idiomatik.v7i1.2303>
- Kurnianto, I., Ismaya, E. A., & Pratiwi, I. A. (2024). Pengaruh model problem based learning berbantuan media rimba terhadap kemampuan berpikir kritis siswa sekolah dasar. *Jurnal Basicedu*, 8(4), 2647–2659. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v8i4.8178>
- Kusumawati, E. P. (2024). *Generasi muda menjaga eksistensi bahasa daerah*. Badan Pengembangan dan Pembinaan Bahasa, Kementerian Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah. <https://badanbahasa.kemendikdasmen.go.id/artikel-detail/4304/generasi-muda-menjaga-eksistensi-bahasa-daerah>
- M U, Sari, H., Hermansyah, S., Maming, K., Kahar, A., Hasan, & Elfahmi, F. K. (2025). Understanding Indonesian students' reading knowledge in digital literacy within socio-cultural of rural middle schools. *International Journal of Information and Learning Technology*, 42(5), 432–448. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJILT-12-2023-0239>

- Manda, I., & Hermansyah, S. (2022). Audio-lingual method to improve students' English speaking skills. *QALAMUNA: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial, Dan Agama*, 14(1), 563–578. <https://doi.org/10.37680/qalamuna.v14i1.4460>
- Mustary, M., Iswary, E., & Hasjim, M. (2018). Penggunaan bahasa Indonesia dialek Makassar dalam kegiatan pembelajaran di SMA Negeri 6 Maros: Kajian sosiolinguistik. *Jurnal Ilmu Budaya*, 6(2), 230–239. <https://doi.org/10.34050/jib.v6i2.4675>
- Nurhidayat, D. (2025, May 15). *Bahasa daerah terancam karena anak muda enggan menggunakan*. Media Indonesia. <https://mediaindonesia.com/humaniora/735003/bahasa-daerah-terancam-karena-anak-muda-enggan-menggunakan>
- Peter, R., & Simatupang, M. S. (2022). Keberagaman bahasa dan budaya sebagai kekayaan bangsa Indonesia. *DIALEKTIKA: Jurnal Bahasa, Sastra Dan Budaya*, 9(1), 96–105. <https://doi.org/10.33541/dia.v9i1.4028>
- Rahim, A., Amin, K. F., Nursalam, N., & Sari, N. P. (2025). Pemertahanan bahasa Makassar melalui sastra tutur sinrilik sebagai identitas budaya lokal. *GHANCARAN: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia*, 7(1), 236–248. <https://doi.org/10.19105/ghancaran.v7i1.18403>
- Sain, Y., & Hermansyah, S. (2025). Exploring the language attitudes of the Tolaki community in Kendari: A comprehensive sociolinguistic analysis. *JOLLT Journal of Languages and Language Teaching*, 13(2), 983–993. <https://doi.org/10.33394/jollt.v13i2.14415>
- Saleh, A. M., Wekke, I. S., Riswandi, A., & Aryanti, A. (2023). Integrasi kearifan lokal dalam pembelajaran bahasa Indonesia di sekolah pendidikan Sulawesi Selatan: Gagasan dan temuan awal. *Jurnal Idiomatik: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 6(2), 167–172. <https://doi.org/10.46918/idiomatik.v6i2.2116>
- Saleh, F., Agussalim, A., Haeruddin, H., M. Aras, N. A., & Vierawan, A. (2024). Karakter Lontara pada aplikasi online sebagai media pembelajaran interaktif bagi guru muatan lokal bahasa daerah di Kabupaten Maros. *Jurnal Idiomatik: Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa Dan Sastra Indonesia*, 7(2), 79–89. <https://doi.org/10.46918/idiomatik.v7i2.2586>
- Saputra, D. G. (2025). Model pembelajaran bahasa dan sastra berbasis kearifan lokal Makassar. *SOSMANIORA: Jurnal Ilmu Sosial Dan Humaniora*, 4(1), 1–9. <https://doi.org/10.55123/sosmaniora.v4i1.4496>
- Sugianto, T. (2023). Keberagaman budaya Indonesia. *TANDA: Jurnal Kajian Budaya, Bahasa Dan Sastra*, 3(06), 13–16. <https://doi.org/10.69957/tanda.v3i06.1967>
- Triastuti, A., Arafat, Y., & Murjainah. (2024). Pengaruh penggunaan media papan sumber daya alam terhadap minat belajar siswa pada pembelajaran IPAS kelas IV SD. *JPDK: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Dan Keguruan*, 9(2), 44–50. <https://doi.org/10.47435/jpdk.v9i02.3180>
- Wahyuddin, N. R., Yanti, N. E., Arnas, R., & Hermansyah, S. (2024). Digital literacy integrated with blended learning in improving EFL students' English language skills: A lesson learned from the Independent Campus

Program. *Journal of Language and Literature Studies*, 4(4), 744–757. <https://doi.org/10.36312/jolls.v4i4.2351>

Widhowati, S. S., Ningsih, D. A., & Indriono, A. (2022). The effect of health education with audio visual media on older adults' knowledge about hypertension. *Indonesian Journal of Community Health Nursing*, 7(1), 25–29. <https://doi.org/10.20473/ijchn.v7i1.39632>