INCREASING INTEREST IN READING IN ESTABLISHING A CRITICAL AND TOLERANT MULTICULTURAL COMMUNITY READING CULTURE

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Abstract: This study aims to provide a discourse on the importance of increasing reading interest in forming a critical and tolerant multicultural society reading culture. The research also aims to bridge the gap by promoting a diverse and inclusive reading culture that fosters critical thinking and tolerance within a multicultural community. These research studies are literature from various sources that discuss reading interest, reading culture, and its relationship with a multicultural society. The study results that have been carried out show that reading activities can broaden the knowledge and horizons of human thinking so that they are not left behind by the rapid development of the times. Everyone must be encouraged to have high interest, activity, and reading habits. Low interest, hobbies, activities, and reading habits can be factors for the decline in the level of progress of a nation. Intolerance, feeling the most correct, the best, and not wanting to respect the opinions, behaviors, and cultures can arise because of low insight, intelligence, and thinking horizons. Therefore, to create a multicultural society that is critical, tolerant, open, and pluralistic, it is necessary to have high reading activities, habits, and culture. This needs to be realized because a high reading tradition can support the acceleration of people's intelligence in responding to various life problems in a nation.

Keywords: reading interest, reading culture, and multicultural society.

Abstract: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk memberikan wacana tentang pentingnya meningkatkan minat baca dalam membentuk budaya baca masyarakat multikultural yang kritis dan toleran. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk menjembatani kesenjangan dengan mempromosikan budaya membaca yang beragam dan inklusif yang menumbuhkan pemikiran kritis dan toleransi dalam masyarakat multikultural. Studi penelitian ini merupakan studi literatur dari berbagai sumber yang membahas tentang minat baca, budaya baca, dan hubungannya dengan masyarakat multikultural. Hasil penelitian yang telah dilakukan menunjukkan bahwa kegiatan membaca dapat memperluas pengetahuan dan cakrawala berpikir manusia agar tidak tertinggal oleh perkembangan zaman yang semakin pesat. Setiap orang harus didorong untuk memiliki minat, aktivitas, dan kebiasaan membaca yang tinggi. Rendahnya minat, hobi, aktivitas, dan kebiasaan



membaca dapat menjadi faktor menurunnya tingkat kemajuan suatu bangsa. Sikap intoleransi, merasa paling benar, paling baik, dan tidak mau menghargai pendapat, perilaku, dan budaya lain dapat muncul karena rendahnya wawasan, kecerdasan, dan cakrawala berpikir. Oleh karena itu, untuk mewujudkan masyarakat multikultural yang kritis, toleran, terbuka, dan pluralistik, diperlukan aktivitas, kebiasaan, dan budaya membaca yang tinggi. Hal ini perlu diwujudkan karena tradisi membaca yang tinggi dapat mendukung percepatan kecerdasan masyarakat dalam menyikapi berbagai persoalan kehidupan dalam suatu bangsa.

Keywords: Minat Baca, Budaya Baca, dan Masyarakat Multikultural

INTRODUCTION

As long as humans live in this world, they cannot be separated from language activities. It is said so because language is a tool for thinking and communicating in human life (Khair, 2018). These two activities are always integrated into the activities of daily human life. By using language, humans can express their thoughts and feelings to others. This shows that language is closely related to human thought processes (Wahid & Solihat, 2020). Thinking is a human mental activity. This mental activity will occur if a stimulus or something causes humans to think (Golombek, 2015). Humans are always thinking every day and continuously by using language media. Therefore, it is correct to say that humans cannot be separated from language (Gutt, 2017).

Reading is one aspect of language skills that is essential in supporting human life. With reading activities, we will learn about previously unknown things. Therefore, the role of reading in modern society is increasingly evident and vital (Gorzycki et al., 2020). People who cannot read or who are lazy to do reading activities will undoubtedly be excluded and unable to compete in their lives. This is in line with Harjasujana (1988), who explained that "Illiterate and literate members of society will be isolated in their lives. Members of society who are illiterate or who are illiterate to discourse and members of society who are literate or who are lazy to read will always be isolated because of their lack of information so that they cannot keep up with the progress of the times together with other community members who are always responsive to the information they receive. So, the vital role of reading in modern society is

evident as it supports language skills, facilitates learning about new topics, and failure to engage in reading activities can result in exclusion and an inability to compete in life, leading to isolation and lack of information.

Tarigan (2010) said, "It seems that it is not an exaggeration to say that the level of reading interest of our students and students also determines the level of progress of our nation and country." Thus, people's interest in reading is a factor supporting the progress of a nation. Furthermore, According to Rusyana (1984), reading is crucial for the survival and progress of both individuals and nations in a society, as it plays a vital role in maintaining and developing life on earth. This means that the interests, habits, and competence of reading a nation are some factors that determine the development and progress of the nation.

Given the importance of reading informal education at the elementary, secondary, and higher levels, efforts are always made to increase interest and reading skills (Yoni, 2020). This must be done because someone interested in reading will be encouraged to do reading activities. Furthermore, regular reading activities will birth to reading habits and traditions or culture, which can also improve reading skills.

According to Nurhadi (2010), having a strong interest or motivation to read can result in the development of a reading habit, which in turn can improve one's reading speed and accuracy or reading proficiency. High interest in reading is one factor determining the success of reading. Therefore, interest in reading needs to be fostered, improved, and owned by every individual, especially students (Kasiyun, 2015). Misdan and Harjasujana (1987) said, "High interest in a topic will provide additional mental energy needed to extract information from a text." Thus, reading interest plays a vital role in supporting reading success.

Reading is an essential educational competency that everyone must possess (Sulistyo, 2017). These competencies are needed to support the availability of high-quality human resources to solve various problems found in life (Mita et al., 2019). Therefore, it is not an exaggeration if these competencies are significant in the primary

education system and even secondary and higher education levels. This paradigm implies that reading competence is essential in supporting human life. The more skilled one is at reading, the more experienced a person is in reasoning and thinking. Vice versa, the more skilled a person is in reasoning and thinking, the more skilled he will be in reading. Thus, there appears to be a reciprocal and complementary relationship between reading and reasoning or human thinking.

METHODS

This research used the literature study or literature review method. This research aimed to present and analyse the findings that have been done by previous researchers regarding increasing reading interest in shaping a critical and tolerant reading culture in a multicultural context. The data sources in this research are journals, articles, and books relevant to the research topic. This data was obtained trough access to online databases such as Google Scholar, EBSCO, ProQuest, and JSTOR, as well as through manual searches in the library.

The data sources selected should be relevant to the research topic and fulfill the predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. The inclusion criteria included: (1) research that discusses increasing reading interest, (2) research that discusses shaping a critical and tolerant reading culture, and (3) research conducted in a multicultural context. While the exclusion criteria include: (1) research that is not relevant to the research topic, (2) research that is not of sufficient quality, and (3) research that is not available in a language that can be understood by the researcher.

The data obtained from the selected sources were then analysed using the content analysis method. Relevant data were collected, categorised, and analysed to be presented and interpreted in this research. Data validity in this study was achieved by using triangulation techniques, namely by comparing results from different data sources. In

addition, the researcher also used the critical method in evaluating and selecting the data sources used.

RESULTS

Increasing Interest and Reading Cultures

In the 21st century, humans are in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0 and society 5.0, an information society that competes to solve complex problems and think critically and creatively (Chalkiadaki, 2018; Sá & Serpa, 2020). Advances in communication technology, data processing, space exploration with computers, and microelectronics as the core mark this. This life phenomenon is characterized by various changes dominated by digital technology (Scherer et al., 2019). Humans are currently using and utilizing digital technology platforms across multiple life activities. In such a situation, knowledge and information owned and controlled by the community can be categorized as strengths. He masters knowledge, information, and technology. He is the first to get a chance in life. Therefore, humans must be competent in mastering technology to explore, master, and obtain various information seriously through reading and publishing activities through writing (Febriyantoro & Arisandi, 2018; Munawar et al., 2021).

The research results show that today's modern society must absorb information as much as 820,000 words per week to maintain its achievements and prestige during global changes. Thus, at least daily, he must read between 4 and 6 hours (Harjasujana, 1988). Therefore, the improvement and development of a society's reading culture need to be fostered and encouraged if it does not want to be excluded from the development of life.

Many researchers and reading experts put forth information about Indonesian people's low interest, hobbies, and reading habits. Therefore, getting into a society with a high love of reading must begin with developing reading habits and culture from an early age. This needs to be continuously socialized and realized because a high reading tradition can

support the acceleration of intelligence and the development of knowledge and the thinking horizon of society in the life of a nation (Kasiyun, 2015; Nafisah, 2016).

Reading is an information-seeking activity through written symbols. In other words, reading is an activity carried out by someone to capture the content or meaning in the reading in-depth, intact, and thoroughly. Reading is also known as a reasoning process, or reading is reasoning. By reading, a person tries to get and process information to settle and be stored in his soul into knowledge. This knowledge will be the basis for the dynamics of life, showing existence, maintaining life, and developing it in the form of science and technology as the necessities of human life (Segev & Sharon, 2017).

Reading can not only become a tradition, but it can also become a hobby (hobby), pleasure, habit, and even a daily need and necessity in life. Various supporting factors are needed to make reading a basic need, both from within and outside the reader. The collaboration between these factors will lead to the emergence of interests, habits, and a penchant for reading (Huang et al., 2015).

Interests and reading habits have an important position in supporting reading skills. Therefore, developing interest and reading habits needs to be carried out continuously. Interest in reading will develop if activities are carried out regularly to become a reading habit (Susilowati, 2016). For reading habits to occur, there must be a driving force to carry out reading activities. In addition, sufficient opportunities are also needed to carry out reading activities. In other words, various factors cause the emergence of interest and reading habits. These factors include the type of reading, the environment, reading facilities, time, awareness, level of readability, prestige, interests, beliefs, and so on (Silmi et al., 2021).

Everyone has needs, and they always try to fulfill those needs. One way to meet these needs is by reading activities. The reading that someone chooses is, of course, the one he is interested in, related to his interests. Rusyana (1984) said, "Interests related to reading are mainly

socio-cultural interests that arise from education. This type of interest, namely broad and deep interest invaluable things, is a characteristic of one's learning. This means that someone will be encouraged to do reading activities if the reading is helpful for him.

The factors that lead to a person's interest in reading include instrumental effects, prestige effects, affirmation of attitudes, and aesthetic experiences. Instrumental effects mean reading activities because of a particular urge or interest. In other words, the instrumental effect is a reading activity that a person carries out because he has specific problems that need to be solved. For example, he wants to face an exam, prepare a speech, write a paper, write an article, write a journal, and so on. This means someone will look for reading material and conduct reading activities related to their interests. Suppose reading materials such as books, articles, journals, or magazines are inadequate. In that case, he will continue to seek and carry out reading activities until he finds ways to solve the problem effectively (Nafisah, 2016).

Another factor that causes someone to do reading activities is prestige or prestige. Reading caused by this factor usually aims to enhance self-image. He reads not because he likes it but wants to invite other people's attention to him. Therefore, reading caused by this prestige or prestige effect cannot develop one's interest and reading habits optimally and permanently (Afriyanti et al., 2018).

Another factor in supporting reading activities is attitude reinforcement. Sometimes, a person is interested in reading because he wants to strengthen his opinion, his belief, or his attitude. He knows he believes in something, such as his party, religion, or something else, but he does not know why. Therefore, he looks for reading material related to or relevant to his belief to strengthen his belief. In other words, he reads to strengthen further his attitude towards something he believes in, maybe even to get new ideas to re-communicate his beliefs to others (Wileman et al., 2016).

Someone may also do a reading activity to get an aesthetic experience from a particular author's work. Through a series of words expressed by a particular author, a reader will feel and enjoy a variety of beauties. The beauty of thoughts, events, the arrangement and selection of the sequence of events, and the beauty of expressing the author's ideas. In other words, someone is encouraged to do reading activities because they want a specific aesthetic experience from reading material (Wuryaningrum, 2020).

Meier and Franz (1986) say, "One of the factors that determine the growth of interest and reading habits is environmental factors, be it the home environment (family), school, group, or association." Someone who has an environment that likes to read will be encouraged to do the same activities in that environment. Therefore, family, school, and other environments need to be arranged in such a way as to increase interest in reading and can become comfortable reading facilities for individuals in the environment to foster reading habits and culture. The statement above aligns with Tarigan's (2010) opinion: "The family as the first party that lays education must be able to become an institution that can provide motivation and facilities for family members to want to read."

In general, interest in reading arises because of encouragement from within and outside the reader. For example, the urge within the reader wants pleasure and beauty. In addition, other impulses can also arise from within the reader because of specific interests, such as economic, administrative, political, religious, cultural, and others. While encouragement from outside the reader, for example, the family environment, school, library, and other environments that support reading activities. The two types of encouragement to read will cause a person to do reading activities. If reading activities are carried out regularly, they will lead to reading habits or traditions (Robinson, 2021).

From the description above, it can be seen that environmental factors considerably influence reading interests and habits. Reading activities can be carried out in the home, school, library, and other places.

Even while waiting for something, anywhere, anytime, we can take advantage of the time to read. Therefore, the environment needs to be sought as optimally as possible to act as a place for cultivating interest and reading habits. Types of reading, several books, atmosphere, parental awareness, teacher awareness, and the reader's awareness of the importance of reading need our attention.

However, if the above factors are neglected, they will inhibit interest and reading habits. Families who do not have the habit of reading, inadequate reading facilities, inadequate library collections, low economic level, lack of time to read, inadequate reading skills, less varied types of reading, level of text readability, lack of encouragement from teachers, people Old age, as well as from himself, are factors that inhibit a person's interest and reading habits. Tarigan (2010) argues, "One possibility is that a lack of interest in reading can be caused by a person's failure to understand the reading." In other words, the difficulty in capturing the meaning of reading will cause someone to stop reading activities, which can be an obstacle to increasing interest and reading habits. This means that the level of reading difficulty influences the growth of a person's interest and reading habits.

Furthermore, Tarigan (2010) emphasized again that "The low interest in reading and the absence of an adequate reading habit of the Indonesian people occur because the community's socio-economic status is still low and they are busy making a living." Of course, they will find it challenging to provide various reading materials with their general low social status. They are too busy making a living to meet their daily needs to have the time or opportunity to read. Such social conditions follow Harjasujana's (1988) opinion: "There is a relationship between socio-economic status and reading ability. Various factors support this, such as malnutrition, poor health, overcrowding, unstable housing, and economic pressures". In other words, people's purchasing power is often used as an apology for one factor hindering tradition and love of reading.

The Tradition of Reading Towards a Critical and Tolerant Multicultural Society

A multicultural society is a society whose population structure consists of various ethnicities, religions, cultures, social environments, languages, and different or diverse characters. This diversity is a source of cultural differences or subcultures influenced by ethnicity and background. In other words, a multicultural society is a society that has diverse religious, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds. This diversity can be seen in ideas, values, social organization, history, habits, and behavior that differ from one community group to another (Au, 2017; Nieto, 2017). Residents in big cities usually consist of multicultural people with different backgrounds. Suppose it is not organized with a sound community system. In that case, this diversity can be one of the factors causing social conflicts or conflicts between these community groups. It can destroy the social and cultural order system that has been built. Social conflicts in Ambon, Poso, and other areas are concrete examples of friction in a multicultural society. Therefore, various parties need continuous guidance in realizing a civilized, critical, and tolerant multicultural society towards an advanced and modern society (Rozi, 2017; Siburan, 2015).

A multicultural society with various backgrounds needs to be developed towards a modern and civilized society that can build, live, and interpret life well without conflict. Community development needs to be carried out to realize personal and community qualities in a society based on a noble character to realize a new society, namely a modern, critical, and tolerant multicultural society. Thus, a democratic and civilized multicultural society open to pluralism can be formed, respects every citizen's rights and a sense of justice, has moral integrity (morals and piety) and has independence in self-development to achieve progress and progress prosperity (Atmaja, 2010). 2020; Erviana & Fatmawati, 2019; Kelly, 2018).

One of the requirements for realizing a critical and tolerant multicultural society is a civilized society. That is, a society with the characteristics of being open, understanding, appreciating, and respecting differences by eliminating personal and group egos. A civilized society is a social system that grows based on moral principles that balance individual freedom and social stability (Atmaja, 2020). The main characteristic of a civilized multicultural society is the existence of cultural pluralism, reciprocal relationships, and mutual understanding and respect. Thus, in this society, there is a process of creating a new civilization that refers to the values of shared policies within a larger community group, namely a multicultural society. In a multicultural society, it is hoped that every community member will work together to build social ties and productive networks and develop the values of solidarity among human beings by putting aside differences and being aware of diversity. In other words, the main characteristic of modern multicultural society is a democracy that upholds human values and different religious understandings, is tolerant, and strictly obeys laws and regulations. Therefore, a modern, critical, and tolerant multicultural society can be realized through transition and continuous learning in a peaceful situation (Munif, 2018; Noor, 2020; Saddam et al., 2020).

The transition process from a traditional multicultural society to a modern multicultural society must be planned, directed, systematic, and gradual in every sector of the nation's life, structurally and culturally. If this is not done, there will be imbalances in various aspects of people's lives, leading to conflicts and shocks that damage the democratic order that the nation's founders have built. Therefore, the reading tradition can be one factor that plays a role in empowering individuals and communities toward a pluralist, critical, and tolerant multicultural society. With the tradition of reading, knowledge, and horizons of human thinking can develop along with the times. In other words, the public must have competence and skills in processing various information, increasing and growing daily through digital and non-digital technology platforms. With good reading competence, they will not be left behind by the development of science and technology, which will ultimately have implications for improving their

quality of life. Finally, the public is not easily provoked by news whose truth cannot be accounted for that is milling about in various media. They will be able to filter and sort information between actual and hoaxes. In other words, modern multicultural society will not simply swallow the various information that comes but critically assess the truth of the information (Arif & Miswar, 2020; Fitriarti, 2019; Winaya, 2019).

Thus, various parties must make reading a tradition always carried out in people's daily lives. Reading should be a hobby, pleasure, and habit, and even become a daily necessity and a basic need. To realize reading as an essential spiritual need, various supporting elements and the participation of various parties are needed according to their respective functions and responsibilities. Therefore, educators, students, parents, librarians, publishers, authors, and other general public need to collaborate and coordinate to encourage people to have good interests, hobbies, habits, and reading traditions in the context of a pluralist multicultural society and respect each other.

CONCLUSION

Based on the description above, it can be seen that increasing interest in reading is essential to support a person's reading culture and ability. The development of interest and reading habits needs to be carried out continuously by various parties so that one's insight and horizon of thinking can continue to increase. Interest in reading will develop if reading activities are carried out regularly and regularly so that it becomes a reading habit that ultimately improves one's reading ability. Therefore, various parties must develop factors encouraging interest, habits, culture, and reading activities. Thus, variations in types of reading, family environment, school environment, and reading facilities need to get the attention of all parties to increase people's reading skills, incredibly multicultural people.

A multicultural society is a society whose population structure consists of various ethnicities, religions, cultures, social environments, languages, and different or diverse characters. This diversity can be seen in ideas, values, social organization, history, habits, and behavior that differ from one community group. This diversity occurs because of cultural differences or subcultures influenced by ethnicity and background. If it is not organized with a sound social system, this diversity can be one of the factors causing social conflict between one group and another. Therefore, it is necessary to have continuous guidance from various parties in realizing a civilized, critical, and tolerant multicultural society towards an advanced and modern society.

The transition process from a traditional multicultural society to a modern multicultural society must be carried out in a planned, directed, systematic and gradual manner in every sector of the nation's life, structurally and culturally. If this is not done, there will be imbalances in various aspects of people's lives, leading to conflicts and shocks that damage the democratic order that the nation's founders have built.

Intolerance, feeling the most correct, the best, and not wanting to respect the opinions, behaviors, and cultures can arise because of low insight, intelligence, and thinking horizons. Therefore, to realize a multicultural society that is critical, tolerant, open, and pluralistic, it is necessary to have high reading activities, habits, and cultures or traditions. With a high reading tradition, knowledge and horizons of human thinking can develop along with the times. In other words, the public must have competence and skills in processing various information, increasing and growing daily through various digital and non-digital technology platforms. With good reading competence, they will not be left behind by the development of science and technology, which will ultimately have implications for improving their quality of life. This needs to be realized because a high reading tradition can support the acceleration of people's intelligence in responding to various life problems in a nation.

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