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### **PROFILE OF STUDENTS' READING LITERACY IN CLASS I MIN 1 MATARAM CITY**

**Muammar**

Universitas Islam Negeri Mataram, Mataram, Indonesia  
[muammar@uinmataram.ac.id](mailto:muammar@uinmataram.ac.id)

#### **Abstract**

This research is motivated by the low level of students' reading literacy at the start of school entry at MIN 1 Mataram City. Of the 130 students accepted, 38 students could not read or were at the beginner level. This study aims to map the profile of students' reading literacy and the teacher's role in overcoming students' reading literacy skills in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City. This type of research is qualitative research. The researcher becomes the key instrument. This research was conducted at MIN 1 Mataram City. Data sources are school principals and class teachers IA, IB, IC, and ID—data collection methods through interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis uses interactive analysis, consisting of three paths: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Data validity by extending the observation time and testing it with triangulation. The results showed that (1) the profile of the reading literacy level of students in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City at the start of school entry was still low. Of the 130 students accepted, 38 students could not read yet or were at the beginner level; (2) several ways are used by teachers in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City to overcome the low literacy skills of students, including (a) the teacher maps students' reading abilities, (b) coordinates with parents of students, (c) guiding students outside teaching hours; (d) giving tutoring on school holidays, and (e) giving gifts.

**Keywords:** Low Class; Reading Literacy; The Profile

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Reading literacy is defined as not only being able to read reading texts but the ability to understand the text being read. A person is said to understand a reading text when he can find the theme and interpret words and sentences until he can conclude it (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018). In other words, reading literacy is students' ability to read and understand written texts well.

In grade I, students must read 4-5 words. This means that students must possess reading literacy before entering school. Students must be skilled at reading in grades I and II (Mustadi et al., 202a2). If not, it can be ascertained; these students cannot follow the learning process properly. Therefore, from an early age, students need to master reading literacy well so that they are expected to be able to master various subject matter when they first enter school.

The quality of student learning will be better if they have mastered reading literacy (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018). The

student's mastery of reading literacy will show the quality of the students participating in the learning process in class. Quality students in grade I already have good reading literacy skills because it is assumed that they can help them master various subject areas in phase I. Students can be allowed to the next level at a higher level due to their mastery of reading literacy good.

In this context, what is meant by reading literacy is beginning reading. Beginning reading is the initial stage of learning to read in the lower grades. In starting the lesson, students learn to recognize letters or series of notes into language sounds by using specific techniques with an emphasis on aspects of the accuracy of voicing writing, proper pronunciation and intonation, fluency, and clarity of voice so that students are more prepared and more courageous to enter the advanced reading stage or reading comprehension in high grades (Muammar, 2020).

Nationally, the facts show that the reading literacy of students aged 15 years is still categorized as low. What's more, compared with students of the same age in neighboring countries (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018). Indonesian students are in position X to last in reading (Sultan et al., 2020). From the results of a survey conducted in 2018, Indonesia even dropped its ranking compared to 2015, from 64th to 72nd out of 79 countries. If examined, the PISA results show that Indonesian students' literacy skills are still low. In reading, if examined, he achieved an average score of 371, far below the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) average of 487. The average score in mathematics is 379 out of the OECD average score of 487, and the average score in science is 389 of the OECD average score of 489 (Muammar, 2020); (Sultan et al., 2020).

The above facts are further reinforced by the findings of Inovasi as an independent institution consistent in literacy studies showing that students' reading literacy skills in elementary schools are deficient. In various districts, most students do not pass the literacy test, especially those in grade I of elementary school. Based on gender, the abilities of male students are consistently lower than female students (Sultan et al., 2020). In West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), 39% did not pass the reading literacy test (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018). The low level of three aspects caused the students who did not pass: letter recognition, syllable recognition, and word recognition. The findings found that 22% of NTB Province did not know letters, 30% did not know syllables, and 35% did not know words (Kementerian Pendidikan dan Kebudayaan Republik Indonesia, 2018).

From the results of interviews with teachers and Madrasah Heads at MIN 1 Mataram City, an overview of students' reading literacy was also obtained, which was still low. Of the four classes that were new students, after the teacher's direct assessment, 71% of students could read, and 29% still could not. This was known

after the teachers conducted an initial evaluation by preparing tests in groups of letters, words, paragraphs, and stories. The students were called one by one and asked to read. If the student fluently mentions the group of letters provided, the student is categorized as mastering letters. However, if there are one or two wrong letters, the student is grouped into the beginner level, just starting to recognize letters. And so on for students who are at the letter level, that is, they can already read some of the letters; word level, namely being able to read familiar words; paragraph level, namely being able to read words, especially familiar ones and being able to read simple short sentences; as well as the paragraph level, which is fluency in reading simple stories and understanding the contents of the report.

The preliminary data above explains that all human knowledge is stored in words (reading literacy). If you don't have these basic skills, all doors to gain a broader understanding will be closed. Therefore, it is necessary to identify students earlier as a first step so that these basic skills are expected to be mastered quickly and precisely. Previous research conducted by (Nuranjani et al., 2022) was completed in Class III SDN 2 Kuta. The results of his research explained that of the 59 students studied, it was found that the reading literacy skills of most students were at the beginner level, with a percentage of 28.81%. The researcher also offers a solution that can be used to teach students reading literacy according to their ability level to improve their reading literacy skills, likewise to research conducted by (Safitri et al., 2022), completed in Class IV SDN Mentokan. The results of his study show that out of 20 students, 16 have reading skills already at the paragraph level, story level 1, and story level 2, so it can be said that students have reasonably good literacy skills.

From the description above, this research is essential and exciting to study to obtain a profile of students' reading literacy at the start of school and the solutions made by the teacher after knowing the profile of students' reading literacy in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City. To determine the student's reading literacy shape, the researcher conducted a mapping and in-depth interviews with the teacher to determine the teacher's actions after knowing the students' reading literacy profile. This research focused on the class I teachers at MIN 1 Mataram City.

## **THEORETICAL BASIS**

Basic literacy is interpreted as 'literacy,' then known as 'literacy' or 'understanding' (Setiawan et al., 2019). In other words, this basic literacy is reading the reading text and understanding the contents of the reading regarding what is stated in the text explicitly (Chairunnisa, 2018). In the lower grades, 'reading and writing literacy' is prioritized because these two language skills are the basis for literacy development in various ways, primarily related to classroom learning continuity. Referring to the 2013 Curriculum, on the first-day students enter school, students must be able to read a few words. Is clearly illustrated in the essential

competencies aspects of knowledge and skills that consider class I students to be able to read (Kasmawati, 2020). The government is also working on developing literacy in reading and writing due to low basic literacy in Indonesia.

In this context, what is meant by reading literacy is beginning reading. Beginning reading is the initial stage of learning to read in the lower grades. In starting lesson, students learn to recognize letters or series of notes into language sounds by using specific techniques with an emphasis on aspects of the accuracy of voicing writing, proper pronunciation and intonation, fluency, and clarity of voice so that students are more prepared and more courageous to enter the advanced reading stage. or reading comprehension in high grades (Muammar, 2020). For this reason, in reading this beginning, students need to be guided by teachers and parents (Abrams, 2010).

## **METHODS**

This type of research is qualitative research. This research was conducted to determine the attitudes of individuals or groups and social phenomena in natural conditions so that descriptive data in oral and written form was obtained, which were then interpreted descriptively. This research will also reveal data holistically contextually by collecting data from natural backgrounds by making the researcher himself a key instrument (Sobry & Hadisaputra, 2020). The research subjects included school principals and class I teachers in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City. Methods of data collection using interviews, observation, and documentation. Data analysis uses data reduction, display, and conclusion (Miles & Huberman, 1994). Data validity is accomplished by extending the presence of researchers, increasing persistence, and data triangulation (Kerlinger, 2006).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **Reading Literacy Profile of Class I MIN 1 Mataram City**

This research was conducted at the beginning of the odd semester, from July to December 2022. After the announcement of the admission of new students, the student's parents re-registered. The school has completed all stages of accepting new students who have been received until students are officially declared to be students in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City.

The next stage is that the school conducts an assessment of new students by providing an evaluation of students' reading abilities. This was done before the intensive class I teacher gave the lesson content determined in the curriculum. The test given is intended to be able to group students based on their level of reading ability. The story of reading ability is divided into five classes, namely: (1) beginners, (2) letters, (3) words, (4) paragraphs, and (5) stories.

The beginner level is intended for students who are new to letters. The letter level is for students who can already read most notes. The word level is for students

who can read familiar words. The paragraph level is for students who can read comments, incredibly familiar ones, and can read simple short sentences. The story level is intended for students reading simple stories fluently and understand the report's contents. This grouping of students based on their ability level provides a different learning experience than usual. Students in a high class will learn together with those in a low class if the level is the same (Nuranjani et al., 2022). In other words, students are no longer grouped by age or grade but by ability level. This is something that is not found in elementary schools. Grouping using this level effectively solves fundamental literacy problems in elementary schools (Banerji & Chavan, 2020). For more details on the form of this test, it can be seen in Figure 1 below.

**Cerita**

Hari ini hari libur. Bapak akan membuat pisang goreng. Bapak meminta Intan pergi ke pasar. Intan berlari ke pasar. Di pasar Intan kebingungan. Uangnya tidak ada di saku. Intan ingin menangis. Seorang penjual pisang melihat uang itu. Dia mengatakan bahwa uang itu jatuh di dekat kaki Intan. Intan berterima kasih, lalu membeli pisang dari Si penjual itu.

**Pertanyaan:**

1. Siapa yang meminta Intan pergi ke pasar?
2. Kenapa Intan kebingungan dan menangis?

**Paragraf**

Adi pulang sekolah. Dia melihat buku cerita di atas meja. Adi membawa buku itu ke kamar. Dia membacanya dengan senang.

**Kata**

orang      kita  
suka    ikan  
rumah    buku  
          tidur  
mulut    pensil  
          teman

**Huruf**

b   L   e   t  
P   h   n  
u   j   R   g  
M   w   d

**Figure 1**  
**Reading Literacy Assessment Test Instrument in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City**

Before the assessment was carried out, the teacher had a conversation with the students to warm up the atmosphere. For students to feel comfortable, teachers are asked to avoid using the word 'test,' 'test,' or other words that make students anxious or uncomfortable. Then, students are called one by one. Other students are asked to do independent activities. The following shows the assessment results of teachers in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City.

**Table 1**  
**Results of the Assessment of Students' Literacy Reading Ability**  
**in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City**

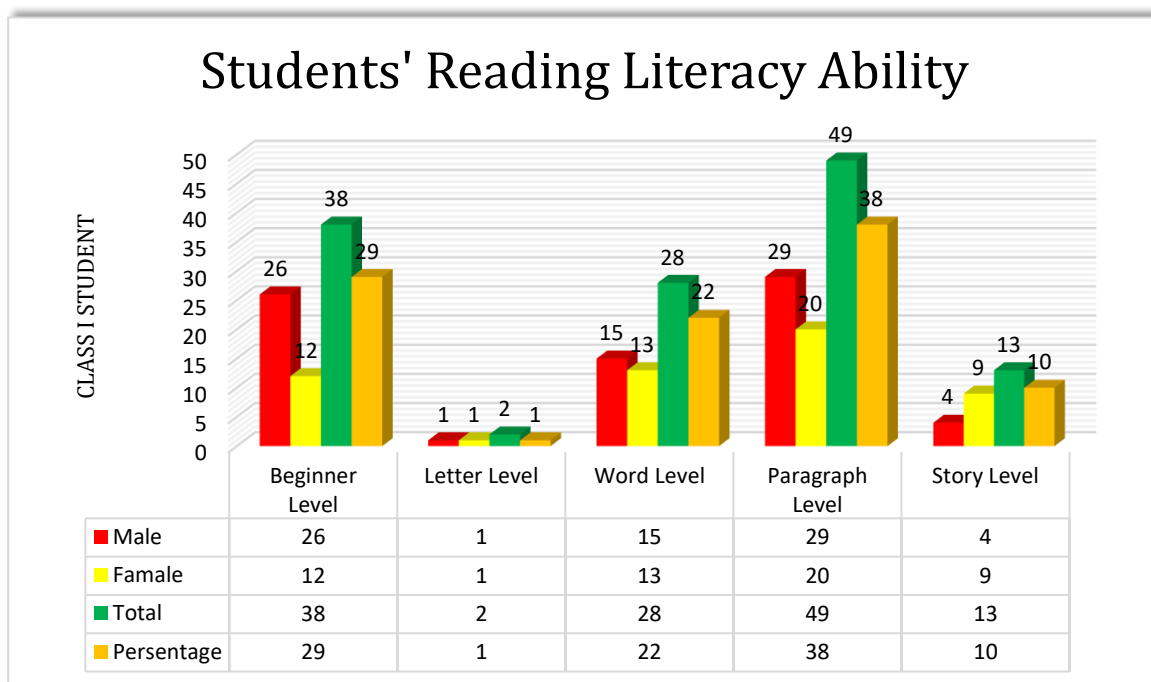
Class	Beginner Level			Letter Level			Word Level			Paragraph Level			Story Level			Total		
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T
IA	14	3	17	1	1	2	2	4	6	2	3	5	1	1	2	20	12	32
IB	1	0	1	0	0	0	6	4	10	10	8	18	1	2	3	18	14	32
IC	10	8	18	0	0	0	3	1	4	4	4	8	1	1	2	18	14	32
ID	1	1	2	0	0	0	4	4	8	13	5	18	1	5	6	20	14	34
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>%</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Class I MIN 1 Teacher Documentation Mataram City*

Table 1 above illustrates students' reading literacy skills in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City. There are four classes assessed, namely: class IA, class IB, class IC, and class ID. From all types of 130 students, the students are grouped according to their ability level. Students' ability levels are grouped into five, namely: (1) beginner level, (2) letter level, (3) word level, (4) paragraph level, and (5) story level. First, there are 38 students at this level consisting of 26 male students and 12 female students, or as many as 29% of students are grouped at the beginner level or students who are new to letters.

Second, there are two students at the letter level consisting of one male student and one female student, or as much as 1% of students are grouped at the letter level or students who can read most of the letters. Third, there are 28 students at the word level consisting of 15 male students and 13 female students, or as many as 22% of students are grouped at the word level or students who can read familiar words.

Fourth, there were 49 students at the paragraph level consisting of 29 male students and 20 female students or as many as 38% of students grouped at the paragraph level or students who could read words, especially those that were familiar and could read simple short sentences. Fifth, there are 13 students at the story level consisting of 4 male students and 9 female students, or as much as 10% of students are grouped at the story level or students who can read simple stories fluently and understand the report's contents. The low reading literacy of these students proves that Indonesia is ranked second from bottom based on the PISA analysis (Muammar, 2020; Mubarok & Anggraini, 2020). To better understand this, it can be seen in Figure 2 below.



**Figure 2**  
**Reading Literacy Ability of Students in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City**

### **The Role of the Teacher in Overcoming Students' Reading Literacy Ability in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City**

The process of admitting new students at MIN 1 Mataram City follows the rules set by the government. For class I students, students who are accepted are students aged 6.5 years to 7 years. If anyone is under the specified age, the school will reject them. This age range affects the maturity of students in participating in learning. Then, for the entrance test, the school did not conduct the test. The school only needs to refer to the student's birth certificate. This is explained by the Head of MIN 1 Mataram City, Ms. Henny Marlina.

"For new students, we refer to the rules set by the government. The age range is from 6.5 to 7 years. This age is considered appropriate to participate in learning. The student's birth certificate indicates it. We don't do tests either. Enough with the birth certificate."

In line with the explanation from the Head of MIN 1 Mataram City above, Baiq Muaini, as Homeroom IC, also explained.

"Every year, it's like that. We accept four classes. As said by the head mother earlier, our reference is the age range of 6.5 to 7 years. Our experience shows that it is different when the student is under that age. We do not provide tests. However, we ask the parents to guide their child's birth certificate."

Research conducted by (Rosalina et al., 2016) explains significant differences in the maturity of school-age children. This is evident from the proper functioning of the delicate motor organs. The percentage of children's participation in learning also shows an active and independent category compared to immature ones.

From the observation results, information was obtained that students who had been accepted as students in Class I MIN 1 Mataram were grouped based on their reading literacy skills. In other words, students are given text as a collection of letters, words, paragraphs, and stories. Students are called one by one to be asked to read it. To read the text, students are directed to read the story first, then continue reading paragraphs, words, to letters. If there are two errors in each text, students will be grouped based on their ability level: beginner level, letter level, word level, paragraph level, and story level. This is in line with research (Oktaviani et al., 2022); (Erfan et al., 2021); (Muammar, 2022), which maps students' reading ability, is based on their level. With this grouping, the results are declared effective.

From the results of the grouping above, students are guided intensively so that they immediately master reading literacy skills or the ability to master letters (Setiawan et al., 2019); (Chairunnisa, 2018). The classroom teacher applies several ways to overcome students' literacy skills in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City.

### **1. The teacher maps students' reading abilities**

As explained above, the school immediately mapped the reading abilities of students who had been accepted as new students. From the results of this mapping, the teacher obtains an overview of students' reading abilities as a whole (Kasmawati, 2020). That way, the teacher can make learning plans to be carried out next. This will also make it easier for teachers to provide action to students who are fluent in reading or cannot read. As explained by Mrs. Mahabbah below.

"Every year, we map out new students regarding their reading ability. We do this to check the students' reading ability first. Once we know, we can classify which students are fluent in reading and who are not fluent in reading, spelling, or cannot read at all."

Mrs. Wahdiah also explained the following.

"We mapped these new students first to find out their reading ability. We have to do this mapping at MIN 1 Mataram City. Because with this mapping, we know which students can read fluently, spell which, and which cannot read at all."

From the observations that were also made, it was seen that the Head of the Madrasah directly directed the class I taught to do the mapping. According to him,

this mapping must be done to facilitate the learning process. If students' abilities are different, it will be difficult for the teacher to carry out the learning process. Later, students who are fluent in reading and students who are not fluent in reading or who cannot read at all will be grouped based on their level to make it easier for the teacher to take action, both how to treat students to the strategies used. This grouping is considered adequate because it will make it easier for teachers to guide students in learning to read beginning (Erfan et al., 2021); (Muammar, 2022).

## **2. The teacher coordinates with the parents of students**

The presence of parents to be involved in overcoming students' reading skills is considered necessary. The school wants the sustainability taught in schools to be reinforced at home. To do this well, the school regulates the mechanism by providing notes in student books to continue being guided at home. Their teachers ordered the children so that their parents taught them to read at home. The next day the teacher will check whether the students have been guided by their parents at home. If this is not done three times, the school asks parents to come to school and discuss it amicably. This is by the following interview results with Ms. Zakiatun Patni.

"We always coordinate with parents regarding the reading ability of these students. We have the mechanism. Usually, we make small notes in student books for parents so that children are guided to read at home according to the notes. The next day, we asked the students whether they had been guided. If the answer is not, we leave a message again, and so on. If we haven't responded three times, we ask parents to come to school and discuss it together."

The same thing was conveyed by Ms. Baiq Muaini as follows.

"We also communicate with parents to intensify students' reading skills. Our parents brought us to school when our notes were neglected several times. Our notes are in the form of directions to guide children to read at home too."

From the results of observations, it can be seen in the guest book that the presence of parents at school is also seen. Parents come to school to fulfill an invitation from the school. The school also confirmed that parents attended school after receiving an invitation from the school. The school communicates with parents regarding parental involvement in guiding children to read together at home (Abrams, 2010). As also explained by (Saryono, Djoko; Ibrahim, Gufran Ali; Muliastuti, Liliana; Akbari, Qori Syahriana; Hanifah, Nur; Miftahussururi; Nento,

2017) that parental involvement in accompanying their children is a must and cannot be ignored. Parents also have to guide their children at home to read intensively. Their role is as mentors and educating children, parents as teachers and role models for children, parents as facilitators, parents as motivators, parents as friends who can communicate with children effectively, and the role of parents as reward and punishment providers (Fikriyah et al., 2020). Even though parental involvement has its challenges, it has been proven to help improve student literacy in reading, writing, and other areas reflecting literacy in the real world (Padmadewi et al., 2018).

### **3. Teachers guide students outside of teaching hours**

Outside of teaching hours, the teacher guides students who cannot read. This guidance is done to accelerate students to be able to read. The places used for reading advice are in the library, UKS, school prayer room, teacher's room, or an empty room that is not used during certain class hours. By guiding outside these teaching hours, the teacher focuses more on driving students to read. The high willingness of the teacher to move students each so a determining factor for students' success in mastering reading literacy. As explained by Mrs. Muhabbah, Mrs.

"We have an initiative to guide students to read outside class hours. Our thoughts will greatly help students master this reading skill. We also determine the location: in the library, UKS room, school prayer room, or unused classrooms."

In line with the explanation above, Mrs. Zakiatun Patni explained as follows.

"We have a high will to guide students who can't read yet. We agree to guide outside of teaching hours. That way, our target for students to master this reading competency can be achieved."

The observations showed that the teachers also guided students to study in the library, UKS room, classrooms, and the school prayer room. Guidance is done to accelerate students' ability to read. Guidance is carried out based on communication with students and parents, such as the child's return being a bit late due to following the reading guide. Based on research results (Jediut, Mariana, Jaiman, Fransiska, & Juano, 2020), providing additional hours of study for students who have difficulty reading and calculating can be said to be effective.

### **4. The teacher gives tutoring on school holidays**

Teachers also give tutoring on holidays. This is done to intensify guidance to students. Lessons can be done at the teacher's house or at the student's house that has been agreed beforehand. This tutoring gives a different feel because the teacher and students are closer to the students. Not only teachers and students but also parents. By tutoring on this holiday, emotionally, teachers, students, and parents become more packed and unconsciously share the same vision to improve students' reading skills. As explained by Mrs. Baiq Muaini below.

"We also provide tutoring to our students on holidays. We do this after seeing the development of students' reading skills which are still low. Minimal attention from parents makes breakthroughs in guiding students to read also at home during school holidays. For example, we spend two hours guiding our students to read on Sundays. The location can be at the teacher's house, or it can also be at the student's house. We also intend to be close to the student's parents so they are emotionally closer to guiding students to read."

Ms. Henny Marlina also conveyed the following.

"The idea for students' reading guidance on this holiday came from our teachers. I, as the principal, support a good idea. We facilitate our teachers to interact with parents by sending letters so that tutoring activities on holidays are done well. This activity has been previously communicated with parents in advance, at least a week beforehand."

Guiding students from home conducted by this teacher makes students' reading skills more effective. Here, the teacher can teach students starting by finding reading books, accompanying them, and providing services to make it easier for them in the reading process. Students also become motivated to learn (Safitri & Dafit, 2021); (Fadhillah & Novianti, 2021).

## **5. The teacher gives a gift**

The teacher also gave prizes to students who were able to read fluently. The awarding of these prizes takes various forms that teachers carry out. Some teachers give 1000 rupiah pocket money, give chocolates, give appreciation by providing stars, give applause, and so on. There are also teachers intending to celebrate if their students can read fluently. These efforts motivate students who are still not fluent in reading. As explained by Mrs. Wahdiah below.

"I usually give students pocket money. The amount is insignificant. Yes, I gave him 1000 rupiah. I do this so that these students continue to be motivated. So, I have some sense that these students don't get bored learning to read."

Ms. Baiq Muaini also conveyed the following.

"As for me, I want to *rowah* (Thanksgiving) if my students are fluent in reading. Moreover, for students whose parents' attention is lacking, I feel sad too. That's why I intended to give Thanksgiving, even though the Thanksgiving will be with student This and his classmates. Not only that, but I also bring chocolates or give stars if students can complete their reading targets. It seems the students are feeling happy too."

Giving gifts by teachers in reading is intended to motivate their students. Prizes can be in the form of praise, motivation, and student grades. Students also feel motivated and more enthusiastic about reading (Ayuniar et al., 2021); (Safitri & Dafit, 2021).

## CONCLUSION

From the results and discussion above, the research conclusions include the following two things:

1. Of all the classes assessed, namely: class IA, class IB, class IC, and class ID, with a total of 130 students at MIN 1 Mataram City, students' reading literacy skills can be grouped into five, namely: (a) beginner level, (b) letter level, (c) word level, (d) paragraph level, and (e) story level. First, there are 38 students at this level consisting of 26 male students and 12 female students, or as many as 29% of students are grouped at the beginner level or students who are new to letters. Second, there are two students at the letter level consisting of one male student and one female student, or as much as 1% of students are grouped at the letter level or students who can read most of the letters. Third, there are 28 students at the word level consisting of 15 male students and 13 female students, or as many as 22% of students are grouped at the word level or students who can read familiar words. Fourth, there were 49 students at the paragraph level consisting of 29 male students and 20 female students or as many as 38% of students grouped at the paragraph level or students who could read words, especially those that were familiar and could read simple short sentences. Fifth, there are 13 students at the story level consisting of 4 male students and 9 female students, or as much as 10% of students grouped at the story level who can read simple stories fluently and understand the story's contents.
2. The teacher uses several methods in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City to overcome the low literacy skills of students, including (a) the teacher mapping students' reading abilities, (b) coordinating with parents of students, (c) guiding students outside of teaching hours; (d) giving tutoring on school holidays, and (e) giving gifts.

This conclusion reinforces the position of students' reading literacy in one school in particular and also in certain areas. The reading literacy profile of students

in Class I MIN 1 Mataram City results will not be the same as Class I in other schools, likewise with the initial writing ability and numeracy literacy. Therefore, other researchers can conduct further research by expanding the study area, starting from two schools in one city, district, province, or country.

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