

Students' Difficulties at Elementary School in Increasing Literacy Ability

Mahrani¹, Siti Meutia Sari², Syamsiah Depalina³

^{1,2} Universitas Graha Nusantara, Indonesia

³ Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAIN) Mandailing Natal, Indonesia

Corresponding Author:  mahraniwrw89gmail.com

ABSTRACT

The emphasis on literacy instruction in schools is an attempt to create a literate generation capable of building the nation in the future. As literacy ability of elementary schools in Padangsidempuan is need to be observed. The focus for this research is to analysis the difficulties elementary school students face when it comes to improving their literacy skills at school especially in elementary school by first discuss the reality of students' literacy skills in Padangsidempuan, then it will discuss students' difficulties in improving literacy skills as a result of insufficient literacy practices and environments; and finally, it will discuss the necessary efforts. The method is descriptive qualitative in order to describe the elementary school difficulties in literacy with 10 elementary schools as respndend. The finding of this research shwoedthose stakeholders are involved in efforts to improve elementary school students' literacy. In this case, policymakers (government), schools, teachers, and parents all have distinct roles and responsibilities based on their capacities. With the promotion of sound literacy practices and an adequate literacy environment, it is possible for our beloved Indonesia to birth a literate generation

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INTRODUCTION

In Indonesia, literacy has not yet become a habit that is considered a necessity. According to a survey conducted by UNESCO at the level of reading literacy, Indonesia is ranked 60th out of 61 countries in the world. The low interest in reading can cause the quality and quality of education in Indonesia to only run in place (stagnant) and tend to retreat. Then, according to Irianto&Febrianto (2017), The ideal target in improving literacy skills is children, because children's activities in the learning process require various references to support their knowledge. An attitude that makes literacy a necessity and a culture will provide many benefits for them. Literacy activities have been increasingly promoted in recent years by a variety of stakeholders, including schools, families, provincial areas, and government levels (Saryono, 2017). Naturally, this is a good thing because it means the quality of human resources will also improve, which will benefit the country as a whole. There are five categories of literacy activities: literacy, numeracy, science, finance, and digital literacy (Sri Wahyuningsih, 2021). These

five forms of literacy are actively promoted, and many political parties are beginning to recognize the critical nature of literacy activities in nearly all provinces. This literacy activity is intended for students in elementary through secondary school, but may also benefit the general public. In an era when information can be accessed so easily and quickly, relying on the ability to read and write is clearly insufficient. Individuals must be able to intelligently and carefully process every piece of information they receive. Indeed, a nation's progress is determined by its citizens' literacy level. Later in life, this literacy ability will determine civilization and a country's contribution to global advancement(Centre for Literacy in Primary Education, 2016; Lutfi et al., 2020; Pratiwi, 2021).

This is consistent with Permendikbud No. 23 of 2015, which emphasizes the importance of schools dedicating time to the habit of reading as a means of developing student character. The literacy that the twenty-first century generation must master refers to the training modules and guidelines for facilitators of the national literacy movement(Chodidjah, 2017) that were agreed upon with the World Economic Forum (2015), specifically literacy, numeracy, scientific literacy, ICT literacy, financial literacy, and cultural literacy and citizenship.



Figure 1. Adaptation from new vision for education: Fostering Social and Emotional Learning (Antoro, 2017)

Literacy implementation is not simple in the modern era. Teachers and students, as well as their parents, face numerous obstacles. One of the impediments is students' lack of interest in reading. This is consistent with Picton(2019) research, which indicates that children prefer to play with their gadgets rather than open books. Almost 70 million children use gadgets on a daily basis, which means that parents must provide extra assistance when their children use the internet.

This research deals with other students' difficulties in literacy ability. This low ability and attitude of literacy occurred in elementary school in Padangsidempuan as one of region that has icon "educational town" in North Sumatera. Another fact is that many students many have not made literacy a necessity. This low ability caused by several factors. So, by pay attention to this fact of literacy ability in elementary school the writer interest to conduct a further research to know the difficulties of elementary school students deals in literay ability of elementary students in Padangsiidmpuan who became the target of this research.

METHOD

The descriptive theory approach was used to conduct this qualitative research, which included data collection, coding, theoretical sampling, and theory.

The data collection stage gathers information that aids and supports the research process. The data were gathered through observations, interviews, and documentation studies in elementary schools throughout Padangsidimpuan, with a focus on grade 2 elementary schools. Observation sheets, questionnaires, interview guide sheets, and anecdotal notes were used in the research. This study enrolled children in the second grade of elementary school. The sample for this study was second graders of 10 elementary schools in Padangsidimpuan. The coding stage begins once all observation data, interviews, and documentation studies are complete. Coding is used to deduce common ground from the source of the research problem. After thorough coding, the next step is theoretical sampling. Data triangulation was used to collect data in order to develop emerging theories and categorize them. The theory stage, which entails the formulation of a theory based on the analysis of the data collected during the study, The resulting theory is broad in scope.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The research on children's fluent reading abilities in Padangsidimpuan village was conducted through the distribution of questionnaires, observations, and interviews to second grade elementary school children in the Padangsidimpuan Village. Online observations were made. When there is a school meeting every two days during the COVID-19 pandemic, children are given printed reading texts. Parents, older siblings, or other family members assist children in making recordings to collect observational data on children's fluent reading abilities. The following are the findings from an examination of children's ability to read fluently in an elementary school in Padangsidimpuan, North Sumatera, Indonesia.

Table 1 the observation's result of literacy ability on Elementary School's Students in Padangsidimpuan

No	Aspects Observed	Total			
		A	%	T	%
1.	Reading is deliberate in its use of pause.	6	42,86	8	57,14
2.	Reading is concerned with the proper use of punctuation.	9	64,29	5	35,71
3.	The reader's attention is drawn to the phrase's presence.	4	28,57	10	71,43
4.	The reader focuses on the phrase's presence.	8	57,14	6	42,86
5.	Reading is attentive to the phrase's presence.	1	07,14	13	92,86
	Count	28	200	42	300
	Average (%)		40		60
	Keterangan n: A=yes T=no				

According to the data in the table above, the ability of second grade elementary school children in Padangsidimpuan, North Sumatra province, Indonesia, that stood out was their ability to read fluently while paying attention to the presence of punctuation marks and the use of intonation. Over half of the children observed could master and pay attention to the presence of punctuation marks and intonation when

reading. Meanwhile, it can be said that the ability to read fluently while paying attention to the use of pauses and the presence of phrases is a critical condition. Worse yet, the majority of children are extremely confused about reading fluently when it comes to the use of expressions. The data indicates that the ability of Indonesian children to read fluently is quite low.

The following pie chart illustrates the ability of children in Padangsidempuan to read fluently on average.

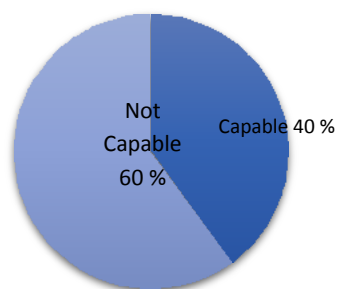


Figure 2 The ability of elementary school children to read fluently

Certain children continue to read haltingly. Even children read certain words excessively long. Additionally, some children read quickly without regard for punctuation, intonation, or expression. However, he is aware of when to use pause. The majority of children make a concerted effort to demonstrate their ability to read fluently. They are, however, superior to all other reading indicators in terms of mastering the use of punctuation and intonation. Meanwhile, indicators such as the presence of phrases, pauses, and expressions appear to be somewhat disorganized. This occurs because they are unaware that someone who is reading fluently uses pauses, expressions, and intonation (Bania & Imran, 2020; Kharizmi, 2015; Rosdiana et al., 2021).

The questionnaire's results were quite surprising, as they contradicted the findings of the observations. The majority of children are already fluent readers. even if the percentage is quite high. Interviews are necessary to bolster the findings. Why do they appear to be fluent readers? This is a frequently occurring misunderstanding.

Numerous children were interviewed. They responded similarly to how they were already fluent in reading because they were no longer stammering when reading words in sentences, they had not spelled in a long time, they were no longer silent spellers, and they could read quickly. The more quickly they read, the more fluently they read. However, take note of your intonation.

In other case with Nuroh (2017), her research explain the efforts that must be made by various parties coordinate to improve literacy in elementary schools. They are the policy makers are; government, schools, teachers and parents have their respective duties and responsibilities in accordance with their capacity. The facilitation of good literacy practices and a supportive literacy environment. All activities that can bring the desire of students to improve literacy skills in this beloved Indonesia. Further, she also explained on her article that the difficulties faced by elementary school students in improving their language literacy skills are the inadequacy of literacy practices undertaken by teachers, the lack of available literacy environments, and different parental literacy levels that impact on the lack of literacy of information obtained by students from the home.

This research is in line with what has been done by Kristy, Hayatin, and Wahyuni (2019) entitled "Improving Literacy for Elementary School Teachers and Students Through Training in Using the Children's Encyclopedia Application" which states that through literacy training activities involving teachers and students of SDN 2 Bandungrejosari Malang, it is proven that there is an influence positive impact on literacy awareness in the school environment. In another study conducted by Sai (2017) in his research entitled "The Effect of the Internet-Based Group Investigation Model on Learning Outcomes and Students' Digital Literacy Ability" states that the application of the internet-based group investigation learning model can improve students' digital literacy skills. Then in a journal written by A. Zahra, Asnimar, Srirarasati, and Yenny L (2017) entitled "Utilization of VideoscribeSparkol Media to Improve Literacy Culture of Teachers and Students" states that the use of videoscribe-sparkol media can improve the literacy culture of teachers and students, both as a generation of 'digital natives' and the digital immigrant generation. The results indicated that children's ability to read fluently was determined by their ability to read without pausing, read faster, and use intonation. Indeed, one sign that a child is fluent is when he or she reads with attention to pauses, intonation, and expression. This error has been passed down to children in Indonesia, who believe that they are considered fluent readers when they stop stammering when reading words in sentences, and they believe that the faster they read, the more fluent they are. Of course, this is a miscommunication.

CONCLUSION

The study's findings indicate that children aged 7–8 years in Padangsidempuan believe they are fluent readers when they are not stuttering when reading word for word. As a result of this new theory, children believe that the faster they read, the more fluently they read. This, however, is a misinterpretation. Children aged 7–8 years are considered fluent readers if they can read with attention to pauses, intonation, and expressions.

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