

DEVELOPING STUDENTS' LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH THE IMPLEMENTATION OF BASIC LITERACY

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ABSTRAK

Abstrak: Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi implementasi literasi dasar di SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya dan dampaknya terhadap kemampuan bahasa siswa, termasuk membaca, menulis, berbicara, dan mendengarkan. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif dengan metode observasi dan wawancara untuk menyelidiki praktik literasi yang diterapkan di kelas. Instrumen yang digunakan mencakup indikator dan pertanyaan semi-terstruktur untuk menggali pengalaman dan tantangan yang dihadapi oleh guru dan siswa. Data dianalisis untuk mengidentifikasi pola dan praktik yang signifikan dalam pengembangan keterampilan literasi. Hasil observasi menunjukkan antusiasme siswa untuk membaca, meskipun ada variasi dalam kemampuan menulis dan berbicara mereka. Wawancara dengan guru menemukan tantangan dalam mengajarkan keterampilan literasi, seperti perbedaan kemampuan siswa dan kurangnya motivasi untuk menulis. Siswa lebih nyaman berbicara dalam kelompok kecil, sementara keterampilan menyimak masih perlu ditingkatkan. Untuk mengatasi tantangan-tantangan ini, disarankan agar guru menerapkan pengajaran yang berbeda, memberikan lebih banyak tugas menulis kreatif, dan mengintegrasikan teknologi ke dalam proses pembelajaran. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa mengembangkan kemampuan bahasa melalui literasi dasar sangat penting untuk mempersiapkan siswa mengikuti pendidikan formal yang lebih tinggi dan menjadi anggota masyarakat yang produktif. Dengan pendekatan yang tepat, diharapkan kemampuan literasi siswa dapat meningkat secara signifikan.

Kata Kunci: Literasi Dasar; Keterampilan Bahasa; Pendidikan Dasar.

Abstract: This study aims to explore the implementation of basic literacy at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya and its impact on students' language skills, including reading, writing, speaking, and listening. This study used a qualitative approach with observation and interview methods to investigate literacy practices implemented in the classroom. The instrument used included indicators and semi-structured questions to explore the experiences and challenges faced by teachers and students. The data was analyzed to identify significant patterns and practices in literacy skills development. The observations revealed students' enthusiasm for reading, though there were variations in their writing and speaking abilities. Interviews with teachers uncovered challenges in teaching literacy skills, such as the differences in student abilities and the lack of motivation to write. Students were more comfortable speaking in small groups, while listening skills still required improvement. To address these challenges, it is recommended that teachers implement differentiated instruction, assign more creative writing tasks, and integrate technology into the learning process. This study concludes that developing language skills through basic literacy is crucial for preparing students for higher formal education and becoming productive members of society. With the appropriate approach, it is expected that students' literacy abilities can improve significantly.

Keywords: Basic Literacy; Language Skills; Primary Education.



Article History:

Received: 29-09-2024

Revised : 05-11-2024

Accepted: 13-11-2024

Online : 05-12-2024



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A. INTRODUCTION

Basic literacy is a crucial skill in education, particularly at the elementary school level. In today's information era, the ability to read, write, speak, and listen effectively serves as the foundation for students' success in various aspects of life, both academically and socially. Literacy encompasses not only the technical ability to read and write but also the understanding, analysis, and application of acquired information (Carless & Winstone, 2023; Erwin & Mohammed, 2022; Hobbs, 2022). According to the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2018, students with strong literacy skills tend to perform better across all subjects and are more likely to participate in lifelong learning. Moreover, the OECD (2019) indicates that literacy proficiency is linked to better socioeconomic outcomes and civic engagement. These skills empower students to communicate effectively and think critically, which are essential in facing the challenges of the modern world.

As stated by Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a prominent Indonesian education figure, literacy is a necessary skill for every individual to comprehend and interpret the world around them. In the context of primary education, the development of literacy skills is of utmost importance, as this period marks the early stages of students building their foundational learning abilities (Hudson et al., 2021). Research indicates that students with strong literacy skills tend to perform better in other subjects and possess better critical thinking abilities (Indah et al., 2022).

Despite the importance of basic literacy, many schools face challenges in effectively teaching these skills. One of the main challenges is the varying abilities among students. Each student comes from different educational backgrounds and experiences, which influence their language proficiency (Cummins, 2021). Some students may already possess good reading and writing skills, while others still struggle. These differences require a diverse and adaptive teaching approach to ensure all students can engage in learning (Gheysens et al., 2022).

Additionally, a lack of student motivation in writing activities often becomes a barrier to literacy development. Many students perceive writing as a tedious and difficult task, which diminishes their motivation to engage in it. Limited access to diverse learning media, such as technology and other resources, can also hinder literacy instruction (Crompton et al., 2021; Minor, 2023). Teachers often rely on textbooks as the sole medium, which may not always captivate students' interest. The effective implementation of basic literacy in elementary schools is crucial for building students' language skills. In the learning process, reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills must be integrated (Kendall & Khuon, 2023; Pérez-Segura et al., 2022). Comprehensive literacy education not only improves language proficiency but also aids students in understanding other subjects. For instance, when

students read texts in science lessons, they are not only learning scientific concepts but also practicing their reading and critical thinking skills.

At SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya, the application of basic literacy is a key focus in teaching. Through observations and interviews with teachers and students, this study aims to explore the basic literacy practices implemented at the school. The study will examine how language skills are cultivated in the classroom and the challenges faced by teachers and students in developing literacy. By gaining a better understanding of effective literacy practices, the research hopes to identify strategies for improving students' language skills at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya.

Through this research, it is hoped that significant contributions can be made toward developing basic literacy skills in elementary schools. The objective of this study is to explore the basic literacy practices implemented at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya and to identify the challenges and strategies used by teachers and students in developing language skills. The findings of this study are expected to serve as a reference for educators and policymakers in developing more effective literacy teaching strategies (Mansueto et al., 2024; Wyse & Bradbury, 2022). Furthermore, this research aims to provide parents with insights into the importance of literacy skills in their children's education. Building students' language skills through the implementation of basic literacy is a crucial step in preparing them for future academic and social challenges. By understanding the importance of basic literacy and addressing existing challenges, students are expected to develop strong language skills and contribute positively to society.

B. METHOD

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study method. The research was conducted at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya, an elementary school focused on developing literacy skills among its students. The participants in this study included two key informants: (1) Teacher: An interview was conducted with Fatimah Barocha, S.Pd., a Grade IV teacher who has experience in teaching and applying literacy-based learning methods in the classroom; and (2) Students: Fourth-grade students involved in the school's literacy activities were interviewed, with one student selected to provide insight into their experiences and the challenges they encountered in literacy activities.

Data collection was carried out using two primary methods: (1) Classroom Observation: The researcher conducted direct classroom observations in Grade IV on September 12, 2024. An observation guide was utilized to systematically record students' engagement in reading, writing, speaking, and listening activities. This guide included specific indicators to assess literacy practices, such as student participation levels and the types of activities observed; and (2) Interviews: Semi-structured interviews were conducted with both teachers and students to gain deeper insights into their

experiences with literacy practices. The interview questions focused on understanding the strategies employed in literacy instruction, the challenges faced, and the perceived effectiveness of various activities. A list of core questions was prepared, covering topics such as students' attitudes towards reading and writing, and the support they receive in developing their literacy skills.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the data, several steps were taken, including: (1) Data Triangulation: Information from classroom observations, teacher interviews, and student interviews was compared to obtain a comprehensive perspective; (2) Detailed Field Notes: Thorough documentation of observations supported the findings; and (3) Verification with Participants: Where necessary, the findings were verified with participants to ensure the accuracy of the information.

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Hasil This study aimed to explore the basic literacy practices implemented at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya and to identify the challenges and strategies used by teachers and students in developing language skills. The findings are based on classroom observations and interviews with both teachers and students.

1. Basic Literacy Practices in the Classroom

a. Reading

The observations revealed that reading plays a significant role in the learning process of Grade IV. Students were enthusiastic when given time for independent reading, usually at the beginning of a lesson to introduce the topic. Many students demonstrated good reading skills, though some struggled with text comprehension. This highlights the need to strengthen reading comprehension as part of basic literacy instruction.

b. Writing

Student writing abilities varied. Some students were able to write simple sentences and paragraphs effectively, while others required assistance in constructing logical and coherent sentences. Writing tasks assigned by the teacher were generally straightforward, such as summarizing readings or taking notes. However, one of the main challenges was the students' lack of motivation to write, which was less appealing compared to reading and speaking activities.

c. Speaking

Speaking activities were given considerable attention by the teacher. Small group discussions were often conducted to help students express their opinions. Observations indicated that students felt more comfortable speaking in small groups rather than in front of the entire class, suggesting that their confidence in public speaking still needed development, particularly in formal speaking settings.

d. Listening

Listening skills were often overlooked in literacy instruction, even though they play a crucial role. During lessons, the teacher provided instructions and stories to train students' listening abilities. However, some students appeared unfocused and required prompting to pay attention. This suggests that listening skills still need improvement through more structured approaches.

2. Teacher Interview

The teacher interview revealed several key points regarding literacy practices in Grade IV: 1) *Integration of Literacy*: The teacher emphasized the importance of integrating language skills into all subjects. She tried to link every lesson topic with literacy activities, ensuring that students not only learned subject content but also reinforced their reading and writing skills. 2) *Challenges*: One of the primary challenges faced was the varying literacy abilities among students. Some students were already proficient in reading and writing, while others struggled. Additionally, the teacher noted that students' interest in writing remained low. 3) *Assessment of Skills*: The teacher reported that most students had met the expected literacy standards, though a few still required additional guidance. 4) *Variety of Learning Media*: The teacher predominantly used textbooks as the main learning medium. She acknowledged that the variety of learning resources was limited, partly due to restricted access to technology.

3. Student Interview

The student interview provided insights into literacy activities from the perspective of a fourth-grade student: 1) *Reading Activities*: The student expressed enjoyment in reading, especially when allowed to choose interesting books. This highlights the importance of offering students choices to increase their engagement in reading activities. 2) *Writing*: The student preferred writing stories over taking notes, indicating that varied writing tasks could increase student interest in writing activities. 3) *Speaking in Class*: The student felt more comfortable speaking in small groups rather than in front of the class, suggesting the need to build students' confidence in public speaking. 4) *Listening*: The student felt they generally understood the material being explained, but when instructions were given too quickly, confusion ensued. This suggests that the pace of the teacher's instruction significantly impacts student comprehension.

4. Challenges and Solutions in Literacy Implementation

Based on the observations and interviews, several challenges in implementing basic literacy at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya were identified: (1) Differences in students' literacy abilities; (2) Low student motivation in writing activities; and (3) Limited variety of learning media.

Potential solutions to address these challenges include: (1) Implementing differentiated instruction to cater to varying student abilities; (2) Assigning more creative and engaging writing tasks to boost student interest; and (3) Utilizing technology in learning to make lessons more dynamic and engaging. The findings of this study show that the implementation of basic literacy at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya has a positive impact on students' language skills, though several challenges remain. Through the integration of language skills into all aspects of learning, it is expected that students will further develop their literacy abilities more effectively.

5. Discussion

The basic literacy practices implemented at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya demonstrate that language skills serve as a crucial foundation in the learning process. As Ki Hadjar Dewantara emphasized, literacy is not merely the technical ability to read and write but also involves critical thinking and understanding information. In this context, the reading activities observed in Grade IV show that students can enhance their comprehension skills and expand their knowledge on various topics (Kim et al., 2021). However, observations also revealed that some students still struggle with text comprehension, highlighting the need for a more systematic approach to reading instruction. This could involve reinforcing comprehension through discussions and Q&A sessions after reading activities (Nguyen, 2022). Such methods not only support struggling students but also encourage more capable ones to share their knowledge, fostering a collaborative learning environment (Lakkala et al., 2021).

Writing skills present a key challenge at SDN Rangkah VI/168. While some students demonstrate good writing abilities, others require additional guidance. The low interest in writing activities is a significant barrier to developing these skills. Consistent with this finding, research by (Bai & Guo, 2021) suggests that low motivation can significantly affect students' writing proficiency. To address this challenge, teachers could implement more creative writing assignments, such as short story writing, poetry, or collaborative projects. This approach could boost students' motivation by offering them an opportunity to express themselves in more engaging ways (David & Weinstein, 2024). Additionally, providing specific and constructive feedback after each writing task could encourage students to practice writing more actively.

Speaking skills are a vital aspect of literacy development. Observations showed that students felt more comfortable speaking in small groups than in front of the entire class, which is typical for students still developing their confidence. Chen (2024) asserts that an individual's belief in their abilities plays a crucial role in their participation in social activities, including public speaking. Teachers can help students build confidence through structured speaking activities, such as small group discussions, presentations, and role-

playing exercises (Moosa et al., 2024; Suban, 2021). This method will gradually make students feel more comfortable and willing to speak in front of the class. Creating a supportive atmosphere and offering praise for students' efforts can also help boost their self-confidence.

Although often overlooked, listening skills play a significant role in learning. The student interviews revealed that their comprehension of the material was heavily influenced by the teacher's delivery. If instructions were given too quickly, students often became confused (Chew & Cerbin, 2021). This highlights the importance of the teacher's pacing and communication style in the learning process. To improve listening skills, teachers could employ various strategies, such as encouraging students to take notes on key points, holding group discussions after listening to explanations, or using engaging audio media (Tabieh et al., 2021). These approaches could help students stay focused and better understand the material.

The research findings identified several challenges in the implementation of basic literacy at SDN Rangkah VI/168, including differences in students' abilities, low motivation for writing, and limited variety in learning media. These challenges require careful attention to ensure that all students can develop their full potential. Proposed solutions, such as differentiated instruction and the use of technology, offer more inclusive approaches. Differentiated instruction allows teachers to provide additional support to students who need it, while utilizing technology can make learning more dynamic and interactive.

The findings align with various educational theories emphasizing the importance of basic literacy. Chuang (2021) posited that learning is a social process that occurs through interaction between individuals and their environment. Therefore, literacy practices that involve collaboration among students, such as group discussions and speaking activities, are essential for reinforcing their understanding and language skills. Additionally, constructivist theory stresses that students learn by constructing knowledge through experience. By engaging students in varied and creative literacy activities, they can more easily absorb and comprehend the information they learn. This perspective is supported by Vygotsky's social development theory, which underscores the role of social interaction in cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Similar studies, such as those by Bjorn (2023), found that collaborative literacy activities significantly enhance students' engagement and comprehension, further confirming the necessity of social learning environments. Moreover, research by Griffin (2023) demonstrated that integrating technology into literacy instruction fosters collaborative learning and motivates students, highlighting the need for diverse instructional approaches that cater to various learning styles. These comparisons underscore the relevance of the current findings within a broader educational context and affirm the critical role of interactive literacy practices in promoting effective learning. In summary, the application of basic literacy at

SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya has had a significant impact on students' language skills. However, existing challenges need to be addressed with innovative and structured approaches. Through collaboration between teachers and students, it is hoped that students' literacy skills can develop optimally, preparing them for a brighter future.

D. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study demonstrates that the implementation of basic literacy at SDN Rangkah VI/168 Surabaya significantly enhances students' language skills across various dimensions. Specifically, reading activities positively impact students' comprehension and knowledge acquisition, while writing tasks foster the ability to construct logical sentences and express ideas, despite the challenges of low motivation. Speaking activities encourage collaborative learning and help students build confidence in their oral communication skills, although many still prefer speaking in smaller groups rather than in front of the whole class. Listening skills, though often overlooked, play a crucial role in understanding lesson content, and improvements in this area can lead to better overall academic performance. These findings underscore the need for differentiated instructional approaches that cater to the varying literacy levels among students. By addressing these specific challenges and implementing targeted strategies, educators can create a more effective literacy environment that prepares students for future academic and social endeavors. To enhance the effectiveness of literacy instruction, it is recommended that teachers adopt differentiated learning approaches and utilize a wider variety of media, including technology, to make lessons more engaging. Additionally, providing specific feedback and creating a supportive learning environment can encourage active student participation. With these steps, it is hoped that students' language skills can develop more optimally, better preparing them for a successful future.

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