Teachers' Basic Literacy Understanding in Learning Based on Students Levels

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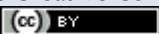**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to identify teachers' understanding of basic literacy skills based on learning according to students' ability levels. This research is a descriptive-qualitative study that describes the insights and understanding of basic literacy skills of teachers from 2 junior high schools in Keude Ulim Village and Balee Ulim, Ulim District, Pidie Jaya Regency. The research activities were conducted in conjunction with training activities for the All Children Literacy and Basic Numeracy. Program for elementary school teachers in Keude Ulim and Balee Ulim villages. The data collection process was carried out with basic literacy test questions given to 30 research subjects. Each subject was assessed based on the achievement of each indicator of mastery of the components of the CERDAS all-child approach, the scope of basic literacy skills, the grouping of students based on basic literacy skills, and the level of students' basic literacy skills. The results showed that of the 30 teachers who took the basic literacy test, only 3 teachers scored >70. In addition, the schools studied that had the lowest basic literacy insights were Keude Ulim and Balee Ulim junior high schools and Pidie Jaya district junior high schools.

INTRODUCTION

Basic literacy skills are one of the key abilities in facing the era of globalization, which is characterized by the swift flow of information that can even result in a flood of information (overload of information). Literacy skills are also described as a person's shrewdness in interacting, the ability to communicate fluently, and the ability to actualize expressed orally and in writing (Irianto & Febrianti, 2017). The term literacy contained in the Dictionary of Problem Words and Expressions states that literacy is related to letters or characters (Nurhayati et al., 2019) . Therefore, it can be said that someone who has literacy skills is someone who is able to read and write.

Literacy skills are important to master because they are very influential for the success of the younger generation. Young people who have good literacy skills will easily understand information both oral and written. Through literacy skills a person can take information, understand information and analyze the information received so that information is obtained that is truly factual and not false information (hoax). With the importance of mastering literacy skills, literacy skills must be familiarized and taught from an early age. Based on the results of a survey conducted by AKSI (Indonesian Student Competency Assessment), Aceh Province ranks 6th out of 34 provinces in Indonesia. In addition, based on the reading literacy activity index issued by the education and cultural policy research center, research and development agency, Ministry of Education and Culture, especially in the skills dimension, Aceh Province is in 33rd position out of 34 provinces. This shows that the literacy skills of students in NTB can still be categorized as very low (Smeru Research Institute, 2016). The low level of literacy skills is closely related to the role of teachers as teachers and the main spearhead in the education process in junior high schools.

Teachers actually play a key role in the process of improving students' education in Indonesia Ahmed, 2020). Teachers act as the main facilitator in the process of assisting the transfer of knowledge and various information to students during the learning process (Catalano, 2014). Therefore, in the process of changing the level of literacy skills of students, teachers must first understand the concept of basic literacy in depth. Through further literacy habituation, it is hoped that it can educate the nation's life as envisioned in the law.

One approach that can be used by teachers in literacy learning in schools is the "All Children are Smart" (SAC) approach. This SAC approach is a learning approach designed by the INOVASI NTB team as an institution engaged in children's education in Indonesia. As the focus of activities in 2021, INOVASI NTB initiated the All Children CERDAS program which aims to improve inclusive literacy and numeracy skills for students in NTB. The SAC approach is a learning approach that adapts the TaRL (Teaching at the Right Level) learning principles from India (Lakhsman, 2019). This approach is very different from the existing learning paradigm in Indonesia, where students are always grouped by age (class I for children aged 7 years onwards). Whereas in the SAC approach, students are grouped based on their ability level regardless of their age. This kind of learning paradigm has been proven successful in alleviating illiterate children in various countries (Banerji & Chavan, 2016).

Grouping students based on ability will also indirectly facilitate the teacher in the learning process. Because one of the obstacles for teachers so far is providing educational services to students whose abilities and characteristics are very diverse in the same class (Mueller & Brand, 2018). If students are grouped based on their ability levels, then teachers can adjust actions, models, media and other learning tools to suit the abilities of students in the group (Awofala & Blessing, 2014). Thus, teachers' insights related to the SAC approach are also important

considering that from now onwards, teachers must be able to provide learning services for heterogeneous students. Based on this, researchers wanted to explore information related to junior secondary school teachers' insights related to the concept of basic literacy based on level-appropriate learning (SAC approach).

METHOD (10 PT)

This research is a descriptive-qualitative research. Creswell (2014) states that descriptive-qualitative research is research that describes phenomena that occur descriptively or narratively. This research approach was used to give teachers insight into their ability to teach basic literacy to learners.

In total, there were 30 teachers involved in this study, all of whom came from 2 junior high schools (SMP) located in Keude Ulim Village and Balee Ulim. The two schools were Keude Ulim and Balee Ulim Junior High Schools in Pidie Jaya Regency. Each school represented 15 class teachers from grade VII (Seven) to grade IX (Nine), the selection of subjects was adjusted to the target of the All Children "CERDAS" Program or Basic Literacy and Numeracy skills which targeted the provision of training for teachers in grades VII and IX. The data collection process was conducted using a basic literacy test given to 30 research subjects. Furthermore, each research subject will explore 1 subject that will be discussed in depth regarding how the teacher's insight and understanding of the concept of basic literacy learning based on student ability levels that are aligned with the All Smart Children (SAC) Program. To make it easier for researchers to analyze the research data, researchers formulated indicators of basic literacy insights in student ability level-based learning that adapted from the Basic Literacy Learning Module developed by the INOVASI NTB Team. The basic literacy insight indicators used in this study can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1: Indicators and descriptions of indicators of achievement of the All Smart Kids program (SAC)

Indicator	Description
Components of the "All Smart Child" (SAC) Approach	name and explain the components main components in the SAC Approach
Scope of Basic Literacy	name and explain the scope of scope of basic literacy
Student Grouping Based on Basic Literacy Skills	understand the rules for grouping students based on basic literacy skills.
Students' Basic Literacy Levels	explain what the ability levels in the concept of basic literacy mean (letter level, word level and paragraph level). letter level, word level and paragraph level).

Source: Adaptation of INOVASI's Literacy Learning Module

RESULT AND DISCUSSION
Results
Basic Literacy Test Score Results
The basic literacy test was given to each teacher (30 people) directly. The test questions on basic literacy consisted of 11 multiple choice test questions and 4 description test questions. The following are the details of the basic literacy test results on all research subjects (30 teachers). The researcher then took one subject each from the two representative schools. From each school, the subject taken came from the participant who had the lowest basic literacy skill score to make it easier for researchers to find out the minimum ability possessed by the research subject.

Discussion
Basic literacy learning activities in accordance with the All Smart Children program always begin with motivational activities in the form of explanations about growth mindset and how to distinguish between someone who has a growth mindset and someone who does not have a growth mindset. This

motivational activity about growth mindset aims to prepare participants (teachers) to actively learn and desire to change themselves which in turn can change the paradigm of thinking of teachers in teaching in general. Furthermore, to find out the baseline to what extent students' mastery of basic literacy skills is carried out identifying basic literacy skills owned by students which are grouped into 5 levels, namely Beginner Level, Letter Level, Word Level, Paragraph Level, and Story Level.

SMP Negeri 1 Ulim

SMP Negeri 1 Ulim is one of the schools in Keude Ulim Village and Balee Ulim, Ulim District, Central Lombok Regency. This school has a teaching staff of 10 people. In this study, there were 5 class teachers who became research subjects (from grade VII to grade IX). Based on the basic literacy test scores, it is known that there is only one teacher who gets a score ≥ 70, namely subject 2. Subject 2's score is 70,37 and 4 other teachers at SMP Negeri 1 Ulim have literacy scores less than 70. The subject with the lowest score is subject 3 with a score of 48,15.

SMP Negeri 2 Ulim

SMP Negeri 2 Ulim is one of the junior high schools in Keude Ulim Village, Ulim Sub-district, Pidie Jaya Regency. When compared to SMP Negeri 1 Ulim, the facilities at SMP Keude Ulim can still be considered more adequate. This school has a total teaching staff of 242 people. In this study, only 5 teachers were included, namely teachers of class VII to class IX, each represented by 1 person. Based on the basic literacy test scores, it is known that of the five subjects (Subject 6 - Subject 10), not a single teacher has a test score ≥ 70. The subjects with the lowest scores are subject 6 and subject 7 with the same score of 40,74.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research conducted, the following conclusions can be drawn: (1) Of the 30 teachers who took the basic literacy test, it can be concluded that only 3 teachers scored > 70. This shows that there are still 90% of teachers who do not understand the concept of literacy in student ability-based learning (in accordance with the All Smart Children Learning Approach); (2) The schools that have the lowest insight are SMP Negeri 2 Ulim and SMP Kabupaten Pidie Jaya. This can be seen from the average score of teachers' ability to answer literacy skills questions; (3) Aspects of insight that are still very low are aspects of the SAC approach (learning according to students' ability levels) and aspects of students' basic literacy levels. This can be seen from the fact that there are still no subjects who could explain the main components of the SAC approach and the level of basic literacy skills appropriately. The suggestions formulated by the researcher include: (1) Further research should be conducted through interviews related to the obstacles experienced by teachers in understanding the concept of basic literacy in learning based on students' ability levels (SAC approach); (2) Teachers should have good literacy insights so that in learning related to literacy, teachers and students can achieve learning objectives well.

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