



Student Literacy through Picture Book Media: Nurturing a Culture in Elementary Schools

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Abstract: The culture of student literacy is the main support in the progress of education in a country. The ability of literacy is believed by developed societies to be a very essential need for every human being. The better the person's literacy level will affect his or her ability to absorb knowledge in the learning process. Literacy skills are a basic ability that every student needs to have. *Gerakan Literasi Sekolah* exists as a government effort to develop a student literacy culture. This movement seeks students to read non-text books for 15 minutes before learning. As an effort to maximize the school literacy movement, picture book media are present as an alternative solution. According to their age range, the students show interest in the learning resources that attract attention. For encouraging students' interest in learning, especially in reading, picture book media can be used in maximizing literacy culture in elementary schools. This study may contribute to enrich research references in the language education field, especially about student literacy.

Keywords: Literacy, Picture Book Media, Elementary Schools

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an important component of a country. Education is used as a way to improve the quality of human resources. At present, it cannot be determined that the progress of education in a country is determined by its literacy culture. Literacy is a very important need for some people. Literacy is also an assessment of people's welfare, which is only about reading and writing. This is in line with Hartati's (2019) application that response literacy, understanding, and activities of daily life are structured and applied through continuous learning activities.

Reading literacy refers to the ability to read and write at a stage adequate to communicate in a literate society. A literate classroom environment is a class environment that is rich in prints (USAID Prioritas, 2014). From a literate class, a literate school environment will also be cultivated. So, it is hoped that a literate school community will grow to make the Indonesian nation literate and have an impact on the progress and civilization of the nation. UNESCO (in Hartati, 2016) explains

that literacy is the ability to understand, understand, predict, create, communicate, calculate, and use printed materials and use various contexts.

The results of the Program for International Students Assessment (PISA) survey on literacy skills include mathematics, science, and language. Conducted on students from various worlds in succession in 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012. Specifically, for language literacy, in 2003 the reading literacy achievement of Indonesian students was ranked 39 out of 40 countries, in 2006 it was ranked 48 from 56 countries, in 2009 it was ranked 57 out of 65 countries, and in 2012 it was ranked 64 out of 65 countries. In 2018, Indonesia was ranked 75 out of 81 countries in the world. Further research by the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS) in 2006. PIRLS conducted a study of 45 developed and developing countries in the field of reading in fourth-grade elementary school children around the world coordinated by The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and obtained results that put Indonesia in 41st place (Kharizmi, 2015).



Based on the results above, reading learning needs to be improved, especially in fostering a student literacy culture. In 2016, the government has made efforts to create a literacy culture by launching the National Literacy Movement (GLN). The National Literacy Movement is an implementation of the Regulation of the Minister of Education and Culture Number 23 of 2015 concerning Cultivation of Character. The National Literacy Movement (GLN) which has been launched is then implemented at the school level through the School Literacy Movement (GLS). The School Literacy Movement (GLS) is an effort made by the government to create literate learning organizations and foster character for school members through various activities including reading non-learning books for 15 minutes (Prihartini, 2017).

The school literacy movement (GLS) should be able to cultivate literacy towards students and their environment. This movement is a participatory effort or activity involving school members such as students, teachers, principals, and parents of students. Sutrianto (2016) reveals that the School Literacy Movement (GLS) is a comprehensive effort by schools as a learning organization and to have lifelong literate citizens through public involvement. Students who have a culture of reading and writing, thus creating lifelong learning. The school literacy movement certainly needs support from several parties including teachers, school principals, and parents. There are many ways that teachers can do to support the school literacy movement, one of which is the use of strategies or the use of media. The media is used in literacy activities to increase students' enthusiasm for reading books so that it is hoped that it will foster a sense of fondness for reading in students. Saputro & Soeharto (2015) revealed that the attractiveness of a media is not determined by the cost or frequency of the media users, but depends on the suitability between the characteristics of the media and the stage of child development.

In an era of increasingly innovative learning, the presence of learning media is something that can be said to be mandatory.

Educational developers are aware that the use of learning media can support more effective learning. Wina (2010) states that the use of learning media can increase student motivation so that students' attention to learning material can increase. Also, learning media concretizes abstract concepts so that it makes it easier for students to understand the material (Rahman, 2019).

Reading activities of students at school, teachers can take advantage of learning media that can motivate students to read and improve student understanding. Learning media are media that can be used directly, are easy to carry, easy to use, and do not depend on technological facilities. The learning media can be print-based. One of the print-based learning media is a picture storybook. Adipta (2016) stated that at the age of elementary school children, choosing the use of picture storybooks is the right choice because at that age children still like stories and colorful pictures. The picture storybook will encourage students' interest in reading and curiosity about the subject to be conveyed. The combination of pictures and writing adapted to the material and arranged attractively will make students not feel bored in reading.

Liz Rothlein and Anita Meyer Meinbach (in Faizah, 2009) revealed: "picture books encourage an appreciation and love for reading as they allow children to participate in the literate community". This makes picture books encourage children's love of reading. Sadiman (2008) explains specifically that graphics function to attract attention, clarify the presentation of ideas, illustrate or decorate facts that might be quickly forgotten, and ignored if they are not graphic.



METHOD

The method used by researchers in this study is a literature study. Nazir (2013) explains that a literature study is a data collection technique by conducting research studies of books, literature, notes, and reports related to problem-solving. The data obtained were read, written, and analyzed in-depth to discuss the sub-chapters to be studied by the researcher. This method is used to obtain a written frame of mind and opinion by studying various literature related to the problem under study. In the process of writing this article, the researcher collected all the data related to the theme of the discussion, namely the culture of student literacy using the pictorial storybook media.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Based on literature studies from several studies that have been conducted on student literacy culture, it can be concluded that student literacy culture can be implemented through the school literacy movement using picture storybook media. This is because the literacy movement has a target to be achieved, which is to create an educational ecosystem in literate primary schools (Faizah, 2016). The educational ecosystem referred to here is a fun and friendly environment for students, thus fostering the enthusiasm of its citizens in learning. And all of its citizens show empathy, care, respect for others, and foster a high spirit of curiosity so that students love knowledge.

The implementation of this school literacy movement, Wiedarti (2016) divides three stages, namely as follows:

1. Habit

Habit aims to foster interest in reading and reading activities in school members. The growth of reading interest is fundamental to the development of students' literacy skills. The focus of activities in the habituation stage are as follows:

- a. Fifteen minutes of reading every day before class hours through reading the book aloud or all school members

reading silently (sustained silent reading).

- b. Build a literacy-rich physical school environment, including (1) providing a school library, reading corner, and comfortable reading area; (2) developing other facilities (UKS, canteen, school garden); (3) providing printed, visual, digital, and multimodal text collections that are easily accessible to all school members; (4) manufacture of print-rich materials.

Based on the explanation, the school literacy movement is in the habituation stage marked by the development of reading interest activities that are fun to read and on reading activities within the school community.

2. Development

Literacy activities at this stage aim to develop the ability to understand reading and relate it to personal experience, critical thinking, and cultivate creative communication skills through responding to enrichment reading activities. The focus of activities in the development stage include:

- a. Fifteen minutes of reading each day before class hours through reading books aloud, reading silently, reading together, and guided reading followed by other activities with non-academic bills, for example: making a story map, using graphic organizers, talking book.
- b. Developing a physical, social, affective school environment that is rich in literacy and creating a school ecosystem that appreciates the openness and a penchant for knowledge through various activities, including (1) rewarding the achievement of positive behavior, social care, and the enthusiasm for learning of students. This award can be done every Monday flag ceremony and/or other commemoration; (2) other academic activities that support the creation of a literacy culture in schools (studying in the



school garden, learning outside the school environment, city / regional library tours, and community reading gardens, etc.)

- c. Development of literacy skills through activities in the school library/city / regional library or community reading park or classroom reading corner with various activities including (1) reading books aloud, reading silently reading together (shared reading), guided reading (guided reading), watching short films, and/or reading visual/digital texts (material from the internet); and (2) students respond to text (print / visual/digital), fiction and non-fiction, through several simple activities such as drawing, making concept maps, discussing, and talking about books.

3. Learning

Sugandi (2004) states that learning the translation of the word "instruction" means self-instruction (from internal) and external instructions (from external). External learning, among others, comes from the teacher which is called teaching or teaching. In external learning, the learning principles will automatically become learning principles.

At this stage, some bills are academic (related to subjects). Reading activities at this stage is to support the implementation of the 2013 Curriculum which requires students to read non-textbooks which can be in the form of books of general knowledge, hobbies, special interests, or multimodal texts, and can also be linked to certain subjects as many as 6 books for elementary students, 12 books for junior high school students, and 18 books for SMA / SMK students. The reading activity report book at this learning stage is provided by the homeroom teacher. The focus of activities in this learning stage include:

1. Fifteen minutes of reading every day before class time through reading books aloud, reading silently, reading together, and / or guided reading followed by other activities with non-academic and academic bills.

2. Literacy activities in learning, adjusted to the academic bill in the 2013 curriculum.
3. Implement various strategies for understanding the text in all subjects (for example, using graphic organizers).
4. Using physical, social affective, and academic environments accompanied by a variety of literacy-rich (print, visual, auditory, digital) reading outside the textbooks to enrich knowledge in subjects.

Septiana (2020) argues that realizing a literate education ecosystem, of course, requires the active role of all school members including principals, teachers, students, and parents in carrying out this movement. However, external parties such as school committees, alumni, and private companies can contribute to increasing the collection of reading books and supporting facilities in this literacy activity. The pictorial storybook media is one of the appropriate media to stimulate students to be more interested in reading.

Stewing (in Susanto, 2011) states that picture books are usually meant to encourage appreciation and love for books. So, students can foster a literacy culture through picture book media. This is because books containing pictures can affect students' interest in reading stories. Picture storybooks can also provide language appreciation and develop students' oral communication, develop students' thinking processes, express feelings, and increase student sensitivity.

Hurlock (in Faizah, 2009) explains that elementary school children like pictorial stories because: (1) children get a good opportunity to gain insight into their personal or social problems; (2) picture stories can attract children's imagination and curiosity about supernatural problems; (3) illustrated stories provide an escape for children regarding the hustle and bustle of everyday life; (4) picture stories make it easier for children to read, even children who don't understand reading can understand the story from pictures; (5) pictorial stories are inexpensive and broadcast on television so that children recognize them; (6) picture stories encourage children to read that are not provided by many other books; (7) a picture story gives the reader something that is



expected (if it is a serial); (8) a picture story usually tells the character to do or say things that the child would not dare to do himself, even though they wanted to do it; (9) the characters in the story are often strong, brave, and handsome, so that the child identifies the hero shop; and (10) the pictures contained in the illustrated stories are colorful and simple enough for children to understand.

CONCLUSION

In this increasingly developing era, literacy skills should become a necessity for students, especially in Indonesia. This is because this ability is the initial capital for students to gain knowledge and success in pursuing better education. Meanwhile, field surveys show that the PISA results regarding the reading literacy of students in Indonesia are still low. Based on the literature review that has been carried out by researchers, one effort that can be done to foster a culture of student literacy is to promote the school literacy movement launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture. This movement is an effort to foster a culture of student literacy to gain good reading comprehension. The use of pictorial storybook media can also help students understand reading and attract students' interest in reading. This literacy movement certainly needs support from several parties to achieve the desired expectations. Real support from all school members and outsiders is by actively promoting the School Literacy Movement (GLS), facilitating supporting facilities such as reading books, writing instruments, and conducive reading places, as well as evaluating the implementation of the school literacy movement (GLS) activities which been done thoroughly.

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