



Efforts by the Homeroom Teacher to Address Reading Challenges Among Class III Students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06

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ABSTRACT

Background: *The research delves into the efforts made by the class teacher to address reading challenges among third-grade students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06. While most class III students typically read proficiently, there are some in SDN Bantar Kemang 06 who require additional support in reading.*

Purpose: *This study aims to identify the specific reading difficulties these students face and explore the teacher's strategies to overcome these challenges.*

Design and methods: *Employing a qualitative approach, the research adopts a case study method. Data collection involves observation, interviews, and documentation techniques. The Miles Huberman Analysis Model guides data analysis through components of data reduction, presentation, and conclusion verification. To ensure data validity, triangulation methods involving source, method, and time are employed.*

Results: *The findings reveal five key efforts by the homeroom teacher to address students' reading difficulties. Firstly, the teacher emphasizes classroom literacy. Secondly, a dedicated reading corner is established within the classroom. Thirdly, additional reading sessions of about 20 minutes are provided after regular learning activities for struggling students. Fourthly, proactive communication with parents and conducting tutoring or individual guidance sessions for students in need are implemented. The identified factors contributing to students' reading difficulties encompass intellectual, environmental, and psychological aspects. These difficulties manifest in hesitancy while reading, inadequate attention to punctuation in lengthy sentences, and a need for assistance in comprehension.*

Keywords: *homeroom, students, difficulty, reading*

Introduction

Education stands as the cornerstone of a nation's development. It equips individuals with the knowledge necessary to enhance their quality of life. When implementing education, particularly in primary schools (SD/MI), it becomes vital to acknowledge the diverse abilities of students, encompassing both their cognitive capacities and skillsets. Primary education serves as the foundational stage where students acquire fundamental skills in reading, writing, and arithmetic.

Within the school environment, teachers play a pivotal role in imparting the skill of reading to students. Through reading, individuals gain information, expand their language proficiency, and develop critical thinking abilities (Hidayah et al., 2021, p. 3). Consequently, diligent study becomes the linchpin of personal success, with reading serving as a conduit for acquiring extensive knowledge, refining cognitive abilities, and fostering effective communication.

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Recognizing the significance of reading, Law No. 19 of 2005 regarding National Education Standards, in article 6 paragraph 5, emphasizes the pivotal role of reading and writing enthusiasm, numerical proficiency, and communication skills in the curriculum for SD/MI/SDLB/Package A or equivalent forms (Khasanah & Cahyani, 2013). Proficient reading skills among students significantly aid homeroom and classroom teachers in conducting effective learning sessions.

Mastering the art of reading is no simple feat. A multitude of factors converge to shape a child's success in this realm. Teachers, students, environment, subject matter, and learning methodologies stand as prominent influencers. However, the mastery of reading strategies emerges as a pivotal factor that can significantly impact students' reading achievements. Among these strategies, speed reading stands out as a technique that can propel reading proficiency to higher levels. The act of reading extends its benefits universally, serving as a gateway to knowledge and information (Meliyanawati, 2016).

In Islamic teachings, reading holds a primordial significance, marked as the initial command from Allah to humanity. The Quran, in surah al-Alaq verses 1-5, emphasizes the pivotal role of reading in acquiring knowledge and achieving success in learning.

Learning difficulties, a facet of which includes impaired understanding of spoken and written language, encompass fundamental physical and psychological challenges affecting various abilities, such as hearing, cognition, speech, reading, writing, and mathematical calculations. These difficulties may stem from mild motor weaknesses or emotional turmoil triggered by adverse economic, cultural, or environmental circumstances. Teachers encounter learning difficulties as symptoms of broader challenges and bear the responsibility of addressing them. Students grappling with such difficulties often struggle to fulfill learning requirements, leading to unsatisfactory outcomes due to their inability to follow instructional cues. Reading difficulties are indicative of both physical and mental disorders and frequently emerge in elementary schools, demanding specialized attention from class teachers to ensure uninterrupted learning processes.

In the realm of education, particularly formal education, teachers stand as linchpins determining the success of educational programs. Apart from their instructional role, teachers, especially homeroom teachers, wield significant influence in shaping students' characters and fostering an environment conducive to skill enhancement. Examining the efforts of the homeroom teacher in addressing reading difficulties in the case study at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 underscores the vital role they play. The homeroom teacher's contributions are invaluable, focusing on guiding students through reading challenges and employing diverse methodologies to surmount these hurdles.

Typically, experts like Johnston, Barnes, and Desrochers assert that Class III elementary students, aged around 8-9 years old, demonstrate good reading proficiency. However, despite this norm, some Class III students still struggle with reading skills. Left unaddressed, these difficulties can significantly impact their future learning experiences, hindering their active participation in subsequent classes. Consequently, the efforts of the class teacher become pivotal, especially within Class III at SDN Bantar Kemang 06, to support students grappling with reading challenges.

In response to these issues, the homeroom teacher has implemented several initiatives to alleviate reading difficulties. These efforts encompass additional after-school sessions dedicated to reading practice, fostering a literacy-rich environment within the classroom, and establishing a dedicated reading corner. Furthermore, personalized guidance and training tailored to address individual student needs involve activities focusing on speed reading and comprehension of sentences.

To comprehensively address these challenges, a thorough analysis of learning difficulties in reading among Class III students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 is imperative. This research aims to elucidate the specific hurdles students encounter in their reading journey, identify influential factors contributing to these difficulties, and shed light on the teacher's interventions in addressing these reading challenges.

The primary focus of this research is to uncover the obstacles students encounter while learning to read, pinpoint the underlying causes of these challenges, and delve into the strategies employed by the class teacher to navigate and mitigate these hurdles effectively.

Methods

This research employs a qualitative approach, specifically utilizing the case study method. A case study method involves an in-depth investigation of an event or case, presenting factual insights. This systematic methodology encompasses various stages, from data collection to the final interpretation of results. According to Rahardjo and Gudnato (2011), case studies offer an integrative and comprehensive means of understanding individuals, facilitating a profound comprehension of their experiences and challenges to foster personal development and problem-solving.

The primary objective of this research is to delve into the endeavors of the class teacher aimed at addressing the reading difficulties encountered by Class III A students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06, seeking to explore and elucidate various facets surrounding this particular scenario.

Findings & Discussion

After conducting data analysis, this research has yielded three key topics:

Result

The Initiatives of the Homeroom Teacher in Addressing Reading Challenges Among Class III Students at SDN Bantar Kemang

Teachers wield immense influence in shaping educational progress. Their achievements in education and learning stem from their individual capabilities, notably those who serve as homeroom teachers. At the elementary level, the role of a homeroom teacher significantly impacts the educational process, particularly in motivating student learning. A homeroom teacher shoulders the responsibility of fostering an effective and efficient learning environment while addressing students' challenges, notably in lower grades where reading difficulties are prevalent.

Mrs. Tien Surtiasih, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III A, highlighted a reading difficulty faced by one student, Pandu, among 28 students. Pandu struggles with reading long sentences and encounters slight difficulty constructing sentences.

Similarly, Mrs. Lela, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III B, identified reading challenges among 26 students. Fahri experiences mild difficulty in fluency, while Revanza faces severe challenges and confusion when encountering lengthy sentences.

In class III C, as communicated by Ms. Desi Nurliani, out of 28 students, Nazihah and Moreno encounter mild reading difficulties, primarily in their fluency during reading sessions.

Observations across Class III at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 revealed several students experiencing reading challenges—Pandur, Fahri, Revanza, Nazihah, and Moreno. Among them, Pandu and Revanza struggle the most with reading lengthy sentences. Recognizing these difficulties, homeroom teachers aim to provide comprehensive reading materials. Mrs.

Tien Surtiasih, S.Pd., expressed her approach by organizing class literacy activities, such as collective reading sessions before the start of regular learning hours.

The school has facilitated various types of reading materials, including picture and non-picture books, stored in designated cupboards. This effort aims to bolster students' reading abilities at SDN Bantar Kemang 06, as indicated by insights from the interviews.

This research focuses on the implementation of the Emergency Curriculum in RA Al-Akhyar. The research focuses on five (5) scopes, namely; time, method, media, material, and learning activeness. The research results were obtained through a qualitative method with data collection instruments through observation and structured interviews with the headmaster of RA Al-Akhyar.

The results of the study show that there is change in the implementation of the emergency curriculum in RA Al-Akhyar according to the mentioned five scopes. At the time, during the pandemic there is a reduction in study time and a change in starting time that is earlier than before the pandemic. On the method side, during the Covid-19 pandemic, the focus changed into three (3) methods or their combinations, namely; (1) inquiry learning; (2) project-based learning; and (3) problem-based learning. Meanwhile, the utilization of Information Technology and the students' surrounding, both before and during the pandemic, the perception is still good. The results of this study also show that during the pandemic there is an increase in the effectiveness of material content for clean and healthy living behavior, as well as literacy content and life skills. As for activeness, the students' activeness is perceived as decreasing.

Class III students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 exhibit a strong inclination towards learning through playful activities. Hence, it's crucial for homeroom teachers to cultivate an engaging classroom environment where the process of learning to read becomes enjoyable rather than mundane. Employing suitable learning methods and utilizing various media aids in smoothing the reading learning process. Insights gleaned from the homeroom teachers of classes III A-B reveal several effective strategies and media used to aid students encountering reading difficulties:

- a. SAS Method: This beginner-friendly approach introduces complete sentences in the learning process of reading and writing, utilizing cards and books as primary media.
- b. Card Sort Method: Encouraging active student involvement, this method employs cards as a learning tool to facilitate engagement during the learning process.
- c. Spelling Method: Using cards and books, this method focuses on spelling enhancement.

Moreover, the dedicated efforts of the homeroom teachers in addressing reading challenges are noteworthy:

- a. Class Literacy Activities: Engaging students in collective reading sessions before the start of class hours.
- b. Creation of a Reading Corner: Establishing a dedicated space within the classroom to encourage reading.
- c. Additional Learning Hours: Providing an extra 20 minutes post regular learning activities.
- d. Parental Communication: Initiating communication and collaboration with parents of struggling students.
- e. Personalized Tutoring: Offering individualized tutoring or guidance to students experiencing reading difficulties.

These proactive efforts by the homeroom teachers have proven effective in aiding students facing reading challenges. By providing specialized attention, the teachers ensure that students grappling with reading difficulties receive the necessary support to enhance their reading fluency.

Identifying the Factors Contributing to Reading Difficulties Among Class III Students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06

Challenges in learning to read are frequently encountered during elementary education, presenting hurdles for students in understanding and comprehending written text. These challenges stem from multiple factors, as elucidated by Lamb and Arnold (1976) and Rahim (2008), categorizing influential factors into physiological, intellectual, environmental, and psychological realms. At SDN Bantar Kemang 06, students' reading difficulties are primarily attributed to intellectual, environmental, and psychological factors.

Intellectual factors notably impact students' reading abilities. These encompass a broad spectrum, including the capacity for comprehensive knowledge, logical thinking, and positive interaction with the learning environment. Students exhibit diverse abilities in grasping material; while some swiftly comprehend, others may require more time. Despite the significance of intellectual factors, intelligence alone doesn't consistently dictate success in reading. Mrs. Tien Sutiarsih, S.Pd, Class III A Teacher, shares insight on this matter:

"Students exhibit varying strengths; while some excel in mathematics, their proficiency in reading might be limited. Understanding that students learn at different paces, the homeroom teacher must employ tailored methods suitable for individual students."

Hence, it becomes evident that the sole measure of a student's intelligence doesn't singularly determine their success in reading. The methodology employed by teachers also plays a crucial role in influencing students' reading abilities.

The second influential factor pertains to environmental aspects, significantly shaping students' reading development. Environmental factors encompass home background, familial experiences, and economic conditions. Insights from interviews highlight that inadequate support, guidance, and parental attention contribute to students' reading difficulties. Mrs. Tien Surtiasih, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III A at SDN Bantar Kemang 06, shared the following perspective:

"Pandu, a student facing severe reading difficulties, experiences challenges due to both parents working long hours, leaving him under the care of his grandmother and older sibling. The lack of parental involvement in his learning and limited communication hinder his progress. My attempts to contact his parents have been minimal, mostly seeking information from neighbors."

Mrs. Lela, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III B, added insights regarding Fahreza and Fahri:

"Fahreza, despite her eagerness to learn, faces fear and discouragement from her mother during reading sessions, impacting her motivation. Similarly, Fahri's reading progress is hindered by his mother's limited time, mainly due to caring for a younger sibling."

Mrs. Desi Nurliani, the homeroom teacher for class III C, emphasized the role of parental involvement in aiding students' reading progress:

"Nazihah and Moreno's improved reading fluency results from extra learning sessions and parental cooperation outside school hours. However, their parents expressed limitations in devoting extensive time to guide and support their reading at home."

The prevailing trend among students facing reading difficulties reflects parental work commitments, resulting in limited parental involvement in their learning. Pandu, representing Class III A, shared:

"My parents work long hours, so there's minimal learning support at home. My mother rarely engages in discussions about my lessons. Most days, I spend time at home with my grandmother and older sister."

This highlights the impact of parental work schedules on limited parental involvement, a contributing factor to students' reading challenges.

Insights from Class III B student Fahreza shed light on the crucial role of parental guidance in education. Fahreza shared feeling afraid and demotivated while learning at home due to her mother's anger during reading sessions. This underscores the significant influence parents wield in shaping their children's learning experiences. Parents serve as the primary educators, profoundly impacting their children's educational journey.

Psychological factors, notably motivation and interest, play a pivotal role in enhancing students' reading abilities. Mrs. Lela, S.Pd., the class III B teacher, emphasized the paramount importance of student motivation:

"The key lies in fostering student motivation and enthusiasm. Without these, students, especially those facing reading difficulties, struggle to progress. Hence, I prioritize instilling motivation in all students, encouraging them to remain enthusiastic about learning."

Similarly, Mrs. Tien Surtiasih, S.Pd., the class III A teacher, stressed the cultivation of a reading culture and motivation:

"I consistently emphasize the value of reading to all students, highlighting the benefits and joys it brings. My aim is to ignite motivation and foster a genuine love for reading among students."

These insights affirm that students' motivation and interest serve as pivotal factors influencing their reading abilities. Students with high motivation and a keen interest in reading naturally demonstrate improved reading skills. Thus, the cumulative effect of intellectual, environmental—specifically parental support—and psychological factors, such as student motivation and interest, collectively contribute to students' challenges and successes in reading.

Challenges Encountered by Class III Students Facing Reading Difficulties at SDN Bantar Kemang 06

Learning difficulties encompass obstacles hindering optimal learning, categorized into three core areas: reading, writing, and arithmetic challenges. Among these, reading difficulty stands as the fundamental hurdle. (Khusnia et al., 2022) Left unaddressed, these difficulties yield substantial impacts on students, leading to lower grades, a sense of burden with assignments, and missed learning opportunities due to reading limitations. Mrs. Tien Surtiasih, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III A, shared insights into the specific challenges faced by one student:

"The student I encountered hesitated when asked to read, expressing a lack of confidence in their reading abilities and resisting longer sentences."

Mrs. Lela, S.Pd., the homeroom teacher for class III B, highlighted common challenges experienced by struggling readers:

"Students facing reading difficulties often exhibit hesitation and a tendency to spell out words. They struggle with punctuation, sometimes overlooking its importance while reading."

Mrs. Desi Nurliani, the teacher for class III C, emphasized difficulties arising from pronunciation and lack of comprehension:

"Students with reading challenges tend to mispronounce words and read carelessly. Their reading lacks comprehension and attention to punctuation, often reading continuously without pausing at appropriate intervals."

These observations underscore the multifaceted nature of reading difficulties, encompassing issues related to confidence, comprehension, pronunciation, and attention to textual elements like punctuation.

Reading proficiency holds paramount importance, especially for elementary students, as it grants access to crucial information, enhances vocabulary, and broadens their knowledge. Addressing reading difficulties promptly is crucial, considering the substantial risks students face otherwise: challenges in communication, perceiving school as burdensome, acquiring lower grades, and falling behind in lessons.

These difficulties commonly manifest as:

- a. Hesitancy while attempting to read
- b. Lack of attention to punctuation
- c. Spelling out words when encountering lengthy sentences
- d. Inability to comprehend the material they read.

Conclusion

The concerted efforts by the class teacher to alleviate reading challenges among Class III students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 were commendable and effective. The homeroom teacher implemented various strategies, including collective reading sessions before class, providing engaging reading materials, allocating extra time post-lessons, maintaining open communication and collaboration with parents of struggling students, and offering personalized guidance to those facing reading difficulties. During lessons, the teacher

consistently motivates and supports all students, particularly those struggling with reading, employing tailored methods and suitable media to aid their learning.

While intellectual factors don't always solely contribute to reading difficulties, understanding individual weaknesses is crucial for the teacher to offer appropriate guidance. However, environmental and psychological factors significantly impact students' reading challenges. Limited parental guidance and support due to parents' work commitments affect students' reading progress profoundly. Psychological factors, notably motivation and interest, also play a pivotal role in enhancing students' reading quality. A lack of motivation and interest impedes the desire to learn to read.

The specific challenges faced by Class III students at SDN Bantar Kemang 06 encompass hesitancy when reading, disregard for proper punctuation, spelling out words in lengthy sentences, and a need for assistance in comprehending written text.

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