

Analysis of beginning reading ability and difficulties faced 4th grade elementary students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah

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ABSTRACT

Background: In the form of learning activities in schools, reading is one of the most essential skills that students need to master. The ability to read for students is seen as a determinant of their success in carrying out their learning activities while at school.

Purpose: The purpose of this study was to find out how far the beginning reading ability of 4th grade elementary school students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah and the difficulties they face.

Design and methods: This study applies a descriptive qualitative method, which is a method that is carried out by visiting data sources directly, then analyzing the data obtained as it is. Researchers collected further data using interview techniques, observation and tests on these students and class teachers to find the causal factors.

Results: the researcher draws the conclusion that in students' initial reading skills, each aspect relates to and influences other aspects of reading, and this difficulty is motivated by factors that become obstacles in applying initial reading skills.

Keywords: Reading ability, reading beginning, difficulty reading

Introduction

In the form of learning activities in schools, reading is one of the most essential skills that students need to master. The ability to read for students is seen as a determinant of their success in carrying out their learning activities while at school. This is because all subject matter in schools requires an understanding of concepts and theories that can be understood through reading activities. The good reading ability of students will have a big influence on their success in learning; vice versa if the ability to read is poor, it will also be an inhibiting factor in the success of his education at school.

The ability to read is an ability that is generally obtained from school, this ability is very important to develop because reading is an activity that can develop knowledge and as a tool for human communication. Reading includes: (1) reading is a process, (2) reading is strategic, and (3) reading is interactive. Reading is a process intended by the information from the text and the knowledge possessed by the reader has a major role in forming meaning.

According to the Regulation of the Minister of National Education Number 58 concerning Early Childhood Education Standards of 2009, concerning the developmental achievements of children aged 5 to 6 years regarding reading ability are listed in the scope of literacy development which includes mentioning several known letter symbols, mentioning groups of images that have sound or the same initial letter, and read the name itself. (Lucky, 2016.)

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The consonant letters that must be pronounced correctly to read at the beginning are b, d, k, l, m, p, s, and t. These letters plus vowels will be used as indicators of initial reading ability so that they become a, b, d, e, i, k, l, m, o, p, s, t and u (Sejati, 2016).

Beginning reading is the initial stage in learning to read which is focused on recognizing symbols or signs related to letters so that it becomes the foundation so that children can continue to the initial reading stage. According to Steinberg (Ahmad Susanto, 2011: 83) beginning reading is reading taught programmatically to preschoolers. This program is concerned with intact, meaningful words in the personal context of children and materials provided through interesting games and activities as a medium of learning. Beginning reading is the initial stage in learning to read which is focused on recognizing symbols or signs related to letters so that they become the foundation so that children can continue to the initial reading stage.

At this early reading stage, it starts when the child enters the first grade of elementary school, which is when he is about six years old. However, there are children who have done it in kindergarten and at the latest when the child is in the second grade of elementary school. At this stage, the child begins to learn vocabulary and at the same time the child learns to read and write the vocabulary. According to Salmiati (2018: 13), explained, reading activities in elementary schools have two stages. First, learning to read is given in the first years of elementary school (grades 1, 2 and 3) which is known as beginning reading. The second is reading for understanding or advanced reading which needs to be mastered by children in the upper grades (grades 4, 5 and 6). Beginning reading is a stage of the learning process for early grade elementary school students. Students learn to gain skills and master reading techniques and capture the contents of the reading well.

Factors Affecting Reading Ability

The ability to read will be different for each child and will develop according to the stimulus provided. However, there are several factors that can affect reading skills in children (Farida Rahim, 2016), such as;

a. Physiological factors

Physiological factors include physical health, neurological considerations, and gender. According to some experts, neurological limitations such as brain defects and physical immaturity are factors that can cause students to be unsuccessful in improving their reading comprehension skills.

b. Intellectual factor

There is a positive relationship between intelligence as indicated by IQ and the average increase in remedial reading but not all children who have high intelligence abilities become good readers.

c. Environmental factor

The environment which includes the background and experiences of students influences their reading ability. Students will not find significant obstacles in reading if they grow and develop in a harmonious household, a home full of love, understand their children, and prepare them with a high sense of self-esteem.

d. Socioeconomic factors of children

The child's socioeconomic status affects the child's verbal abilities. This is because if students live with families who are in a high socio-economic level their verbal abilities will also be high. This is supported by the facilities provided by their parents who are at a high socioeconomic level. It is different for students who live in families with low socioeconomic status. Their parents cannot meet their children's needs and their children tend to lack self-confidence.

Psychological factors

Psychological factors include motivation, interest, and social, emotional, and adjustment maturity. Based on the description above, it can be concluded that initial reading ability is a reading stage marked by mastery of the alphabetic code, that is, children are only limited to reading letter by letter, recognizing phonemes and combining phonemes into syllables to form simple words.

At the beginning of reading, there are several indicators that need to be achieved by students. Accuracy, clarity of sound and fluency are things that need attention when learning takes place. However, in the process students often experience difficulties in learning to read and rarely get attention from the teacher. Likewise, Sunaryo Kartadinata emphasized that some teachers or educators who are involved in the implementation of the learning process every day tend not to fully understand their students who have learning difficulties (Candra Dewi, 2017).

A number of related studies have been carried out before, including to reveal the Analysis of Beginning Reading Difficulties of Grade 1 Elementary School Students (Mitra Rahma & Febrina Dafit, 2021) Beginning Reading Readiness of Elementary Grade Students (Gabriela Kaunang, Joulanda A.M. Rawis, Richard Daniel Herdy Pangkey, Jane Mangangantung, 2022) Analysis of Beginning Reading Difficulties in Grade 2 Elementary School Students (Riska Septiana Soleha, Enawar, Dilla Fadhillah, Sumiyani., 2021) Beginning Reading Difficulties in Grade 1 Students at Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (Raihan Riza Ramadhan, Wini Tarmimi, 2022) analysis of difficulties Beginning reading for grade I students at SD Demangan, Yogyakarta (Fifin Pridasari, Siti Anafiah., 2020) Effects of Teacher and Parent Communication on Students' Beginning Reading Ability in Elementary Schools (Siti Walimah., 2021) Analysis of beginning reading ability and difficulties faced by students elementary school (Asratul hasanah, Mai sri lena., 2021) Analysis of Beginning Reading Difficulties in School-Age Children Basic (Riga Zahara Nurani, Fajar Nugraha, Hatma Heris Mahendra., 2021) Analysis of Students' Difficulties in Beginning Reading in Grade 1 SD Negeri 3 Darek (Awanisul Haudini, Lalu Hamdian Affandi, Khairun Nisa., 2022) implementation of the storytelling method on children's early reading skills has difficulty learning to read (Rosika Novia Megaswarie., 2020) Based on the illustration of the phenomenon and a number of related studies, the researcher is interested in uncovering the research objectives of analyzing the extent of the initial reading ability of 4th grade elementary school students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah. and the difficulties it faces. In addition, this goal is also intended to find out whether there are other difficulties experienced such as obstacles in the initial reading process that occur at school or outside of school in grade 4 students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah.

Methods

The purpose of this research is to find out how far is the beginning reading ability of 4th grade elementary school students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah. and the difficulties it faces. The location of this research was conducted at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah Tarbiyatul Falah, Tajur Village, Bogor Regency. The time of the research was carried out in 2 days, on December 1 and 2 2022. On December 1 2022, the researcher conducted an initial interview regarding initial reading ability with one of the class 4 homeroom teachers at MI Tarbiyatul Falah, then the next day, December 2 2022 researchers began to carry out research with respondents.

This study applies a descriptive qualitative method, which is a method that is carried out by visiting data sources directly, then analyzing the data obtained as it is. Descriptive qualitative research aims to describe various phenomena found in the field, both natural and engineered, paying more attention to characteristics and quality, as well as the interrelationships between activities (Sukmadinata, 2011).

The first step taken by researchers in the field was to conduct a preliminary reading assessment on students using the preliminary reading assessment instrument. In order to know the ability of each student in reading the beginning. This assessment was developed by *Research Triangle International* which allows countries to measure systematically how well children in the early primary grades acquire reading skills. EGRA works on the principle that learners in all languages go through the same stages and that there are common levels of reading at the initial level of all languages. With reference to these principles, EGRA details each assessment based on levels of reading mastery (ACDP Indonesia, 2014). This assessment is able to diagnose various reading difficulties experienced by early grade students. This test is carried out individually with an estimated time of around 15 minutes per student by reviewing the following aspects; (1) recognize letters, (2) read words, (3) read words that have no meaning, (4) fluency in reading aloud and understanding the contents of the reading, and (5) listening comprehension (listening).

After obtaining data from students' reading test results, the researcher then analyzed the data by performing non-statistical analysis calculations with the following steps:

1. Giving the correct answer score per question item from the participant.
2. Calculate the percentage of scores obtained.
3. Giving value to each aspect with the specified categorization.
4. Calculate the average percentage of each aspect of reading.

The formula used by researchers in calculating the acquisition score is

$$NP\% = \frac{n}{N} \times 100\%$$

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Keterangan: | |
| Np% | : persentase skor yang diharapkan |
| n | : jumlah skor yang diperoleh |
| N | : jumlah skor maksimum |

With the categorization of giving scores based on the results obtained are as follows:

Score $\leq 44\%$: Less

Score $45\% \leq$ to $\leq 64\%$: Enough

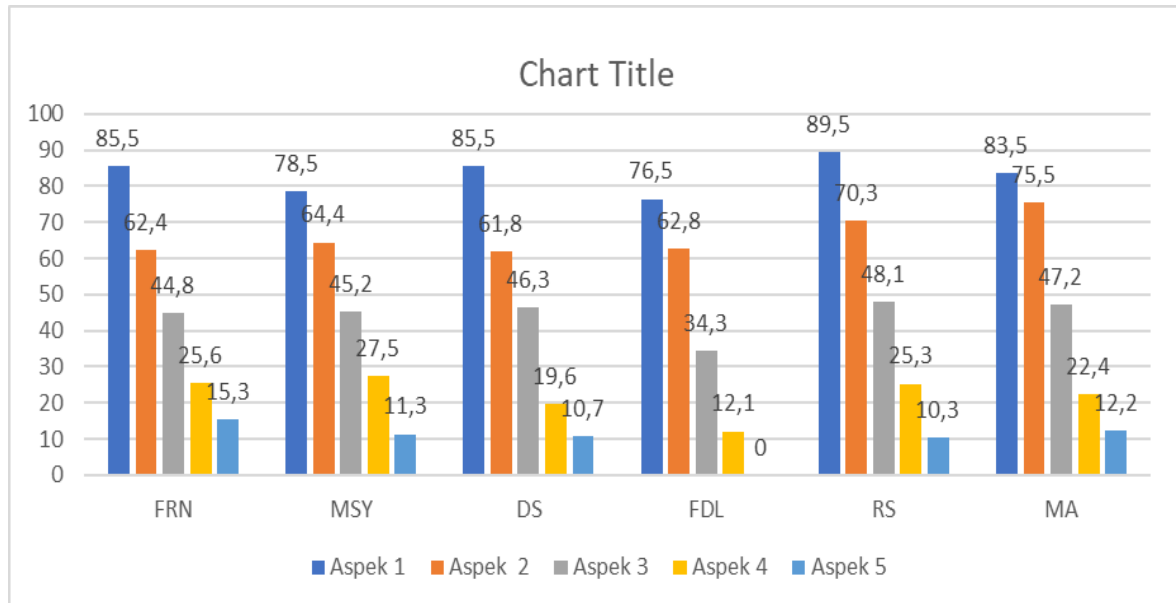
score $65\% \leq$ to $\leq 84\%$: Good

Score $\geq 85\%$: Very Good

Furthermore, from the results of the assessment it will be seen that students have difficulties in reading the beginning and are followed up with the next technique; interview, to find the causal factors. Interviews were conducted with seven students who were detected to have difficulties in starting reading. Researchers also conducted interviews with parents of students in order to obtain more complete information about the factors that cause students to experience difficulty in reading. The data obtained was then analyzed using interactive model data analysis from Miles and Huberman (Sugiyono, 2009), by first reducing the data, then presenting the data, and drawing conclusions (verification). Finally, to support the research findings, the researcher also used documentation techniques in the form of notes and data on student scores by class teachers.

Findings & Discussion

Based on the results of the reading test, there were six students who were identified as having difficulties in beginning reading whose comparisons are shown in the following diagram:



Information :

Aspect 1: Understanding the Symbols of the Vowel Language

Aspect 2: Understanding the Language Symbols of Consonant Letters

Aspect 3: Reading Patterned Syllables

Aspect 4: Reading Words

Aspect 5: Reading Sentences

The diagram illustrates which aspects are difficult for students in beginning reading. Based on the table above, it can be seen that there are errors that are often made by students who have difficulty in reading beginning in grade 4 MI Tarbiyatul Falah are omitting words or letters, pronouncing wrong words, reading with the help of the teacher, repeating readings, turning letters, correct their own reading, and hesitate and halt in reading. This is due to the students' lack of ability to recognize all the letters and not being able to read syllables.

Furthermore, the researcher conducted interviews with students who had difficulty reading the beginning and their parents to find information on the factors that caused this to happen, the details of which are described in the description below. this:

1. Name : FRN

Male gender

Age: 9 years

Description of reading difficulties:

The test conducted on the FRN resulted in a score obtained on the reading test conducted was 85.5% in the aspect of understanding vowel language symbols, 62.4% in the aspect of understanding consonant language symbols, 44.8% reading syllables with FRN patterns as well still very difficult in reading words so that they get scores on reading words as much as 23.6% and 15.3% on aspects of reading sentences. When the reading test was carried out, it was seen that the FRN still did not recognize all the letters properly and had difficulty

distinguishing the capital "I" from a small "l", "v" from "f", and was hesitant to sound the letter "Q". This affects the aspect of reading as evidenced by the lowest score he obtained, namely 15.3% in the aspect of reading sentences. After observing and conducting interviews, when participating in class learning, FRN found it difficult to focus on learning and was easily distracted by things around him. In addition, when they were at home, FRNs rarely studied on their own and received less guidance from their parents. Her parents stated that FRN was quite difficult to teach her to read and preferred to play, so she had very little time to learn to read at home

2. Student name : MSY

Female gender

Age : 10 years

Description of reading difficulties:

The test conducted on MSY yielded a score of 78.5% on the aspect of understanding vowel language, 64.4% on the aspect of understanding language on consonants, 45.2% on the aspect of reading patterned syllables, 27.5% on reading words and understanding content reading, as well as 11.3% in the aspect of reading sentences. Even though the ability to recognize letters is very good, MSY's ability in the aspect of reading words is still quite low as evidenced by the acquisition of scores reading patterned syllables of 45.2% and reading words of 27.5%. MSY was still halting in reading the words being tested. Based on the interviews conducted, information was obtained that MSY did not repeat reading lessons at home and received less guidance from her parents. MSY's parents stated that the reason their child could not read well was because the child's time at home was more often used to care for his younger siblings, helping parents at home so that he had less time to study. As for the intensity of learning to read, it is quite often done at night. The house also provides reading books and reading learning media.

3. Name : DS

Male gender

Age: 9 years

Description of reading difficulties:

The acquisition of DS scores on the reading test conducted was 85.5% in the aspect of understanding vowel language symbols, 61.8% in the aspect of understanding consonant language symbols, 46.3% reading patterned syllables, 25.3% reading words and comprehension of reading content, and 10.3% on aspects of reading sentences. In the tests conducted, it appears that DS has difficulty reading words even though his ability to recognize letters is quite good. This is evidenced by the score he got on the aspect of reading syllables with a pattern of 46.3% and reading words 25.3%, that is, only a portion of the number of words tested. Based on the interviews conducted, DS stated that learning to read was a difficult thing for him so his interest in reading was not too high. From the interviews conducted, DS's parents stated that the reason their child could not read well was because the child was lazy to study, did not focus when studying with his parents at home. DS also did not take kindergarten education before. In addition, the intensity of children learning to read at home is also lacking. Parents also provide reading books, but not media for learning to read at home.

4. Name: FDL

Male gender

Age: 9 years

Description of reading difficulties:

In the test conducted on FDL, it was found that FDL was able to recognize all the letters so that he obtained a score of 76.5% on the aspect of understanding vowel language symbols. However, in the next aspect, FDL was not able to do well and scored 62.8% for understanding the language symbols of consonants, and 34.3% for reading syllables with patterns. Even in the next test, when asked to do a word reading test, FDL immediately gave up and said that he had not been able to read the text. However, in the aspect of listening comprehension, FDL was able to find answers to the questions given, even though they had not been able to write them down on the answer sheet. After conducting interviews, information was obtained that FDL received less attention from his parents at home, especially providing reading guidance. Her parents also stated that the tutoring given to FDL was lacking because they were busy working. The availability of reading books and reading learning media for FDL at his house is also not available.

5. Name: RS

Female gender

Age: 9 years

Description of reading difficulties:

Acquisition of RS scores in the reading test was 89.5% in the aspect of understanding vowel language symbols, 70.3% in the reading aspect of understanding consonant language symbols, 48.1% in the aspect of reading patterned syllables, 20.3% in reading words and comprehension of reading content, and 10.3% on aspects of reading sentences. It can be seen that the lowest score obtained by RS is on aspects of reading sentences and understanding the contents of the reading, namely 10.3%. RS is halting in reading these words and often makes mistakes such as omitting letters and turning letters around. Based on the interview results, RS stated that he enjoyed participating in reading lessons at school, but rarely re-trained his reading skills at home. The parents stated that they rarely practiced their children's reading skills at home and said that the hospital was lazy to teach them to read.

6. Name: MA

Female gender

Age: 9 years

Description of reading difficulties:

The scores obtained by MA on aspects of understanding language symbols for vowels were 83.5%, aspects of understanding language symbols for consonants were 75.5%, reading syllables with patterns 47.2%, aspects reading words 22.4% and reading sentences with score 12.2%. The lowest score obtained by MA was in the aspect of reading sentences 12.2%, where MA experienced doubts when reading and omitted several letters in words such as "singing" which should be "singing", "bebek", which should be "behind". Based on the interviews conducted by MA, he stated that he was not happy when learning to read and considered reading to be a difficult thing for him. Meanwhile, her parents stated that MA often played at home and was quite difficult to ask her to study. They also admit that there is a lack of reading guidance given at home to MA.

**Beginning Reading Ability of Grade 4 Students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah
Aspects of understanding the language symbols of vowels**

This aspect assesses students' ability to pronounce and understand vowels. Students are asked to name the letters arranged randomly on the given test sheet. In this aspect of understanding the language symbols of vowels, the majority of students are fluent in pronouncing letters.

Aspects of understanding the language symbols of consonant letters

this aspect measures students' abilities with consonant letters, students are asked to name and distinguish capital letters and lowercase letters in consonants. In this aspect, most students are able to name and distinguish consonants well. However, some students still experienced errors in pronouncing several letters, such as DS, FDL who had doubts when sounding the letters "p" with "q", FRN who were hesitant to sound the letters "d" with "b", and MA who had difficulty distinguishing "m". " with "n" and other letters.

Aspects of reading patterned syllables

This aspect measures the ability to read separate words. Students are asked to read meaningful words fluently. In this aspect, some students are able to read words well. However, some others, such as FDL, MSY and FRN, scored below expectations, namely in the sufficient and poor categories. As for the form of reading it becomes halting. or even seen from the expressions on the faces of students who are very difficult and tired in trying to read.

Aspects of word reading

This aspect is almost the same as before, but the difference is that the words on the test sheet are words that are read without a pattern. This aspect is another way to measure students' phonemic awareness and orthographic understanding. In this aspect, there are some students who are able to read words fluently. However, students such as DS, FDL, FRN, and MA have difficulty reading words that have quite a lot of syllables, such as 'have', 'a', and so on. The characteristics of these difficulties are halting, reading with the help of the teacher, omitting letters, guessing words and making mistakes in pronouncing words.

Aspects of reading sentences

In this aspect, students are asked to read sentences that are often asked in everyday life. however, there were five students who could not achieve the expected score, namely FDL, DS, RS, and MSY. The mistakes made were in the form of omitting some words in sentences, feeling tired in reading with patterns, and guessing the contents of the reading. In addition, some of them had difficulty answering the questions given based on the content of the reading.

Mistakes Made in Beginning Reading by Class 4 Students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah

In previous research it was identified that students who had difficulty learning to read at the beginning had difficulty learning to read letters, words or sentences that were not caused by major cases such as mental retardation, low visual and hearing, movement disorders and emotional disturbances. Reading difficulty is related to (1) reading habits, (2) mistakes in knowing words, (3) mistakes in understanding, and (4) various symptoms (Abdurrahman, 2013). Fauzi (2018) explains that early reading learning difficulties are associated with abnormal reading habits in the form of movements full of tension, such as frowning, the rhythm of the voice rising, or biting the lips. In addition, it also shows the behavior of refusing to read, crying, feeling tired, or trying to fight the teacher. Other characteristics include repetition or unreadable skipped lines, movement of the head to the left or right, sometimes placing the head on the book, and reading distance of less than 34.3%. Based on a comparison of the three reading assessments conducted by Hargrove (Abdurrahman, 2013) it was found that students who had difficulties in beginning reading tended to make mistakes in the form of (a) omitting words or letters, (b) inserting words, (c) replacing words, (d) wrong pronunciation, (e) reading with the help of the teacher, (f) repetition, (g) letter

reversal, (h) lack of attention to punctuation, (i) self-correction, and (j) hesitating and halting

Factors Causing Beginning Reading Difficulties

Internal factors Based on interviews conducted by researchers with students and their parents, it can be concluded that most students who experience difficulties in beginning reading have less interest in reading activities. This is evidenced from the results of interviews with parents of students that when students are at home it is difficult to be taught to read, even refuse. In addition, the researchers also found this finding by looking at the condition of the students when the tests were carried out, where some students felt bored quickly. In addition, in the interviews there were also several students who answered that learning to read was something that was quite difficult for them and they did not like it. This is a big task for class teachers and parents to increase students' interest in learning to read, because grade 4 students should already understand the form of reading well, which requires fun methods and interesting media for students. Unfortunately, the media for learning to read at MI Tarbiyatul Falah is still not varied. Likewise, the learning media owned by students and their parents at home.

External Factors

Lack of attention and guidance from parents at home

Based on the interviews conducted, some students who have difficulty in reading at the beginning rarely get guidance in learning to read with their parents at home, the role of parents in improving learning abilities becomes very large. If parents do not provide intensive guidance to their children's learning, then this can have a very bad impact on students' learning abilities, especially in the aspect of reading.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research conducted on Grade 4 students at MI Tarbiyatul Falah and with all the data that has been analyzed and discussed in the previous chapter, the researcher draws the conclusion that in students' initial reading ability, each aspect relates to and influences other aspects of reading, especially in aspects of recognizing letters. If students are weak in one aspect, especially in the aspect of recognizing letters, it will affect their ability to complete the test in the next aspect. This can also be seen in the various mistakes made by students, where out of 10 forms of errors there are 7 errors that often occur by students which tend to be caused by poor mastery of letters. The internal factor behind this is the lack of students' interest in learning to read at the beginning. Meanwhile, the external factors are the lack of attention and guidance from parents at home; transfer of learning to online systems due to the pandemic; the minimum duration of study hours for low grade students at school; lack of focus of the (current) curriculum on students' reading skills.

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