Analysis of Literacy Program Based on Ability Level of Students in Elementary School

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Learning based on student ability is one of the new approaches in the learning model. In general, learning is based on the class or age of students. This study aims to analyze whether the ability-based learning model is effective in improving students' abilities, especially in learning basic literacy. The study used a qualitative descriptive approach. The research location is at SDN Persil. Collecting data using observation, interviews, and documentation. The research subjects were 99 students. The results of the study indicate that ability level-based learning can improve students' basic literacy skills. The indicator of the increase in students' abilities can be seen from the increasing percentage of the number of students who advance to the story level.

Keywords: basic literacy, ability level, elementary school

1. Introduction

Literacy cannot be separated from human life. Both basic literacy and advanced literacy play a very important role in solving the problems of human life. Most of the information is presented in the form of text, videos, and images. Literacy skills are needed to understand this information. Moreover, for students, literacy is a very important ability in developing knowledge and skills in learning [1]. The reality is that there are still many students in elementary schools who are not proficient in basic literacy. Based on the results of a survey conducted by one institution, it shows the low basic literacy skills possessed by students, especially those in the West Nusa Tenggara region [2]. This is ironic, in the midst of the government's efforts to invigorate the national literacy movement, it turns out that there are still students who cannot read. This problem is very dangerous if a solution is not immediately found [3]. All parties have worked hard to improve student's literacy skills, one of the parties considered the most responsible is the teacher.

The low basic literacy ability of students was confirmed by the principal of SDN Persil, Central Lombok district, West Nusa Tenggara Province. The information obtained during the preliminary study was still found by many students who were not fluent in reading. Furthermore, the principal said that apart from not being able to read fluently, the students at the school on average were unable to understand what they had read. Such conditions aroused the interest of teachers to make changes. One of the changes that have been made by the teacher is to apply literacy learning according to level. This model changes the old paradigm that carries out learning based on class or student age [4]. This can be understood because basically, students have different abilities, including in terms of literacy learning. Some students can learn fast and some are slow learners. Every student must get appropriate learning services [5]. Therefore, learning according to level is expected to facilitate the diverse abilities of students. With the change in the learning model carried out by the teacher, it is necessary to analyze whether the literacy learning model based on level can improve students' basic literacy skills. This study aims to analyze the effectiveness of the implementation of literacy learning based on the ability level of students at SDN

Lingkok Lima. Through this research, it is expected to find solutions to improve students' basic literacy skills.

2. Literature Review
2.1 Basic Literacy

Basic literacy includes reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills [6]. This skill is a mandatory requirement for everyone, especially in the era of globalization which is dense with information. Literacy is related to letters and letters, so people are said to be literate if they have basic reading and writing skills. These two skills become the basis for students to develop knowledge and skills and help in understanding information both oral and written. In general, basic literacy in Indonesia is still low, although the literacy rate is relatively high. One of the reasons is the undeveloped culture of literacy. The government has made various efforts to cultivate literacy in every community activity through the national literacy movement [7]. Especially in the educational environment, the government encourages every school to carry out a school literacy movement. The bottom line of this government program is to improve people's literacy skills, not only being able to read but also being able to understand the information correctly. By having this ability, it is hoped that people will be smarter and wiser in understanding information [8].

2.2 literacy based on students' ability level

Level-based literacy learning is essentially an adaptation of the Teaching at the Right Level (Tarl) learning model. This learning approach has been tested in several countries around the world. One of the countries that succeeded in implementing the TaRl model as India [9]. The paradigm used in the TaRl model is ability-based learning. This is different from the paradigm applied in Indonesia. In determining study groups, TaRl uses the student's ability approach, while in Indonesia in general it uses age groups. To begin addressing the real learning crisis in India, Pratham developed a solution called Teaching at the Right Level (TaRL). This approach allows children aged seven years and over who are likely in Grades 3, 4, and 5 to acquire basic reading and numeracy skills, in a relatively short period. At this age, school-going children have had substantial exposure to the school environment and can acquire these skills through an accelerated learning approach. This method has several core elements of its instructional practice [10]. The Teaching at the Right Level approach has been proven to be able to solve the problem of illiteracy among children in various countries [11]. Ability-based grouping of students can make it easier for teachers to provide learning services because they have relatively the same characteristics and abilities [12]. In addition, teachers can also more easily design and determine models, actions, and learning media according to the level of students' abilities [13]. Before TaRL was implemented on a large scale in public schools, researchers evaluated the impact of high-intensity learning during school hours. This model proved to be very effective, bringing about a huge increase in the students' level of language and math learning [14].

3. Method

This research is a qualitative descriptive study. The research subjects were elementary school students with a total of 99 students. The research location is at SDN Persil. Collecting data using interviews, observations, and document studies. The informants involved were teachers, students, and school principals. This research was conducted to analyze the effectiveness descriptively on the application of the literacy learning model based on the ability level in improving students' basic literacy skills. The instruments used were observation sheets, interview guides, and field notes [15]. There are three indicators of learning effectiveness used, namely: an increase in the number of students who fall into the story level category after learning, student participation in learning, and the ease of implementation by teachers. First, learning is said to be effective if the number of students who enter the

story level after learning is more than before learning because the story level is the highest ability in the basic literacy level. Second, learning is said to be effective if students are more enthusiastic and motivated in learning. Third, learning is said to be effective if the teacher can apply the learning model easily. Observations were made when literacy learning was carried out. Checking the validity of the findings is done by extending the participation of participant observation during the learning process

4. Results and Discussion
4.1 Description of the Literacy Learning Process Based on Student Ability Level

Learning literacy according to the ability level of students begins with several stages. Before learning, an initial assessment was carried out. The goal is to know the students' initial abilities before implementing learning. In this initial assessment, students are grouped according to their ability level. There are five levels used to identify students' literacy skills, namely: beginner level, letter level, word level, paragraph level, and story level. The beginner level category consists of students who cannot read at all or do not know letters at all. The letter level consists of students who have recognized letters but have not been able to read words. The word-level consists of students who can read stringing syllables into words and can read familiar words. The paragraph level consists of students who can string words into complete sentences even though they are still spelling. The highest level is the story level. Students included in this category are students who have read fluently, reading speed is stable and reading intonation adjusts to punctuation marks. In addition, students at the story level are required to be able to answer questions based on the text they read. This is done to find out whether the student can understand what is read or not because in basic literacy students are not only required to read fluently but are also required to understand the information contained in the reading. The following is one of the documentation for the initial assessment of student abilities.

Figure 1. Initial test of reading ability

After an initial assessment (pre-test) has been carried out as shown in Figure 1, the next step is to group students based on the level that has been obtained. Each student learns according to his level. If the number of students at one level accumulates, then students are divided into several groups (study groups) so that learning can be effective. In determining the name of the group, they no longer use class names but use flower or hero names. The goal is not to cause feelings of inferiority for students who enter the lower level. After the learning is completed then a final ability test (post-test) is carried out. The goal is to determine the level of success of the implementation of the learning that has been done. Based on the teacher's data, the following can be presented a comparison of the students' initial and final literacy ability tests.
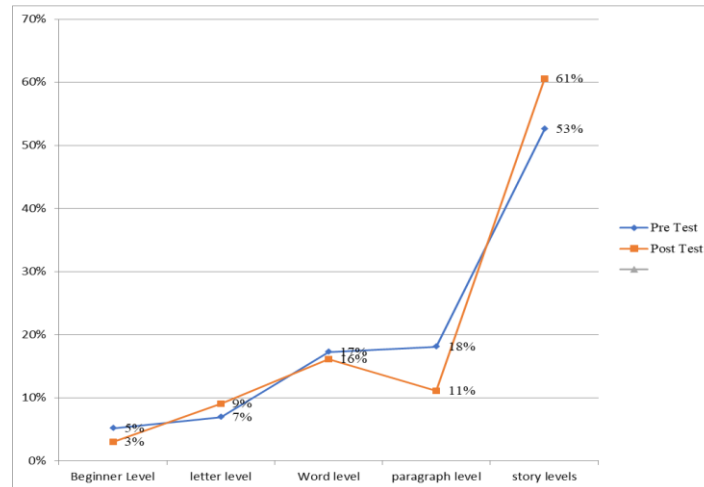
Figure 2. Comparison of early and late literacy skills

The blue line in Figure 2 is a line that describes the students' initial literacy ability before learning, while the yellow line describes the students' final literacy ability after learning. Based on the picture, it can be seen that the number of students at the beginner level after level-based learning has decreased. Initially, the number of students at the beginner level was 5% of 99 students, while after learning it became 3%. This data shows that students at the beginner level have decreased by 2% or have leveled up. The number of students at the letter level increased by 2%. At first, it was only 7% to 9%. The 2% increase came from the beginner group who had advanced to the letter level, assuming the number of students at the letter level did not experience any movement. Changes in the number of students also occurred at the word level, although it was not too big, which was only 1%. Significant changes in composition occur at the paragraph level. The number of students at this level was initially 18% after learning to 11%. This data shows there are as many as 7% of students have advanced to the story level. A significant increase also occurs at the story level. From the initial 53% to 61%. These data indicate that there is an increase in the level of students' literacy skills from the paragraph level to the story level and there are even students who from the word level go directly to the story level. Based on the data described above, it can be understood that the implementation of level-based learning is effective in improving students' basic literacy skills. The indicator is the increase in the number of students at the story level after learning has been carried out. Students who are at the story level are students who have read fluently and can understand the contents of the reading. With the increasing number of students at this level, learning can be categorized as effective.

4.2. Description of student learning participation in level-based learning

Level-based learning is a relatively new learning model. Students are accustomed to learning according to their respective classes. Students give various responses to this level-based learning. Some students are very excited and enthusiastic about the application of this learning model. One of the reasons is being able to study with different friends in learning. It can be understood that ability level-based learning no longer uses the class system, so students from class V can join class II students, or class III students can also join class IV students, and so on as long as they are at the same level. With this change in study groups, students are more active in learning, moreover, with the use of various media, students like this learning model. In addition, students who experience obstacles in reading can be more enthusiastic because they feel they can learn according to their abilities. Students who study at their level

of ability can learn faster when compared to studying according to their class. This is understandable because in general students will feel frustrated if they experience continuous difficulties in learning, especially if they are far behind their classmates. Students with reading difficulties tend to avoid reading activities and lack confidence in reading because there are many unknown words in the books they read [16]. The implication is that students will feel bored and discouraged. However, some students feel embarrassed when studying with younger classmates who are far below them. There are even some students who do not want to take part in learning because they do not like to join students from lower classes. A similar condition occurs if students from the lower class are included in the high class. In general, they are less active in learning and tend to feel inferior. Feelings of fear and inferiority can be caused by differences in age and maturity so that it has an impact on student behavior when studying.

The application of literacy learning based on students' ability levels is quite effective in improving students' basic literacy skills. However, there is a need for improvement efforts so that students' basic literacy skills can increase significantly. Based on the results of interviews with teachers, one of the efforts made is to minimize the number of students in each group. The goal is to maximize learning. The use of media is also one of the improvement efforts made by teachers. The limited availability of media does not reduce the enthusiasm of teachers to continue to innovate and be creative. This needs to be done considering that one of the keys to success in learning is the use of adequate media [17].

5. Conclusions

Based on the results and discussions that have been presented, it can be concluded that ability-based literacy learning can improve students' literacy skills. The increase obtained from the application of the learning model is not very significant because of various factors, both students, teachers, and parents. The first factor is that students find it difficult to change study habits. Students are used to learning by class, when students learn according to their level they feel awkward, inferior, and lack confidence. The teacher factor is the teacher's mastery of the literacy learning model according to the level that is not maximized. The implication is that the application of learning is also not optimal so that learning outcomes are not in line with expectations. The parent factor is that there is no follow-up guidance independently at home. It can be understood that literacy requires habituation, without parental support the implementation of learning programs will not be optimal.

Based on the conclusions that have been conveyed, it can be seen that literacy learning based on ability level is quite effective in improving students' basic literacy skills. However, several suggestions can be given to make literacy learning more effective, including the use of adequate media, variations in learning places not only in the classroom, and building communication with parents for follow-up learning at home.

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