



An Analysis of Grade IV Elementary Students' Reading Comprehension Skills in Narrative Texts

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Abstract. The present study aims to analyze the reading comprehension skills of the students of SDN 202 Suryalaya Bandung. The investigated indicators include to know main ideas, to figure out important messages and information within the text, to find facts and opinions, and to draw conclusions in the narrative text. This is a descriptive study employing the qualitative approach. The test and interviews were used as the data collection methods. The grade IV students were selected as the research subjects, with a sample of 6 students consisting of 2 high-skilled students, 2 medium-skilled students, and 2 low-skilled students. The results indicate that the high-skilled students have no difficulty reaching the specified indicators, while the medium-skilled experience some difficulties and confusion in reaching several indicators including to figure out messages in the text, to find opinions, and to draw conclusions. Meanwhile, the low-skilled have difficulties achieving the reading comprehension skills indicators because some of them have not been able to read well and also experience difficulties in understanding the provided problems.

Keywords: Reading Comprehension, Narrative Text, Elementary School

INTRODUCTION ~ In the 21st century literacy which is basically realized in the form of reading skills has become a fundamental thing. Reading is a basic activity carried out by each individual to develop information and knowledge that can be applied in everyday life. The reading activity has also become commonly performed by people or communities living in the era of revolution 4.0 due to the fact that obtaining information would definitely require reading skills. Therefore, it is imperative that reading be familiarized with from an early age, starting from the introduction of letters and word meanings to the formation of new information and knowledge.

Parents undertake some mental preparation on their children during the pre-school phase, which is prior to their readiness to learn reading by the time they have been enrolled in elementary school. 6-year-old children can recognize

between 4000-5000 words (Child Development Tracker, 2019). Every year children will learn 3000 words, meaning that when they continue to the next grade, children will notice 7000-8000 words. As many as 20 words will be obtained by children every day in school. Therefore, if the children happen to have difficulty in understanding certain words, they will experience difficulties in other fields as well, and this affects the children's future. Getting the children to be used to the reading activities as early as possible may increase their motivation and feel the enjoyment of doing it.

A continuous habit of reading will affect the children's thinking process to become critical, creative, and logical. The more children read, the more information they gain since reading is such a complex activity that involves a variety of aspects of skills within, which require an



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understanding to obtain the message and information from a particular text.

Reading comprehension may be developed through the complete and correct acquisition of basic language skills (Akkaya, 2011: 69; Balta & Demirel, 2012; Başar & Gürbüz, 2017). In order to know the basic language skills, students are firstly trained to read well so that they can comprehend as well as master the reading comprehension skills. The reading comprehension skills might lead to the academic success in the future that, therefore, must be developed since the students' first year in elementary school (Yilmaz, 2011: 10; Anilan, 2004. 91). These reading comprehension skills become the key to student success in exploring a wide range of knowledge and sciences, achieving learning goals, and applying them in daily basis. The reading comprehension skills can affect other language skills so that these skills must be acquired by students as soon as possible by making reading a habit from an early age. Some indicators of reading comprehension exist, including:

- 1) to know main ideas,
- 2) to figure out messages within the text,
- 3) to find facts within the text,
- 4) to provide opinions found in the text,
- 5) to draw conclusions.

However, a great number of problems have been experienced by students in the process of learning the reading comprehension, and this must be taken into considered by both the government

and teachers. Some students are able to read but not by understanding the contents of the reading, some others are able to read but are reluctant to understand the contents of the reading so that they have not been able to describe the contents of their reading or to understand the meaning of each paragraph in the reading text. This phenomena is proven by Krismanto (2015) based on his research findings via observation, indicating that from the student scores of Indonesian Language subject on reading skills, only 53% of them are able to achieve more than the specified Minimum Completeness Criteria (KKM) which is 70. In addition to that, Ni Kadek Sudiarni and Made Sumantri (2019) reveal that many of the schools facing the issue of their students not being able to reach the specified KKM for the reading comprehension skills, which are as much as 75%. This shows that students' reading comprehension skills are still very low and highly requires a learning process which train and lead them to mastering the reading comprehension skills. Driven by such reality, the researchers were interested in exploring deeper the problems in reading comprehension skills of the grade IV elementary students.

METHOD

The study was conducted at SDN 202 Suryalaya Bandung, at September 10th 2019, during the academic learning process on Theme 1: the Beauty of Togetherness, Subtheme 1: Cultural



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Diversity of My Country. It was carried out in grade IV of Elementary School. The purpose is to explore the students' reading comprehension skills on narrative text. The qualitative approach was utilized. The qualitative study is defined as one of the research procedures used to explore problems and develop detailed understanding of central phenomena that produce descriptive data in the form of speech or words from the people being observed.

The researchers were involved in the data collection process by conducting the interviews, undertaking the analysis, and preparing the report based on the elicited through the study. Instrument is a tool used to obtain and collect the desired data. Some instruments were employed in this study, including a writer test in the essay form of 5 questions, followed by the interview on a teacher to gain the additional data to support the results of the test of students' reading comprehension skills. The data analysis was carried out during and after the data collection. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the

qualitative study refers to a research methods carried out carefully to generate descriptive data and is used to analyze the reading comprehension skills of the students.

RESULTS

The present study was conducted at SDN 202 Suryalaya Bandung with the subject including a total of 35 students enrolled in grade IV. Based on the report card grades and the interview on the classroom teacher, six students were selected as the research subject, consisting of 2 high-skilled students, 2 medium-skilled students, and 2 low-skilled students in terms of reading comprehension. In measuring their skills, several indicators were employed, i.e. to know main ideas, to figure out messages within the text, to find facts, to find opinions, and to draw conclusions.

In order to determine the reading comprehension skills, the students were given a narrative text by the researchers, together with the 5 questions. The results of the reading comprehension test administered to 35 students are presented in the recapitulation table as follows:

Table 1. Recapitulation of Reading Comprehension Skills on Narrative Text

No	Main idea	Message in the text	Fact	Opinion	Conclusion	Amount of Student
1	√	√	√	√	√	1
2	√	√	√	-	-	5
3	√	-	√	-	-	5
4	-	-	√	-	-	14



Image of Recapitulation of Reading Comprehension Skills on Narrative Text

Based on table 1, it can be seen that there is 1 student who is able to achieve the indicators of reading comprehension skills, which are to know main ideas, to figure out messages within the text, to find facts, to find opinions, and to draw conclusions. There are 5 students who are able to meet some of the indicators including to find out main ideas, messages in the text, and facts. Meanwhile, 5 students meet the indicators of finding main ideas as well as messages within the text. 14 students fulfill the indicators of finding main ideas as well as facts in the text, and 10 students have not been able to reach any of the specified indicators yet.

Having administered the written test to determine the students' reading comprehension skills, the researcher carried out the interviews in order to completely find out the students' reading comprehension skills during the learning process. The interviews involved 6 students who consisted of 2 high-skilled students (NS and GN), 2 medium-skilled students (KA and AP), and 2 low-skilled students (NS and IN).

According to the interview results of NS, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, NS is able to analyze the main idea of the text. For the 'to figure out messages' indicator, NS is able to answer very well and recognize the information in the text.

For the 'fact and opinion' indicator, NS is able to make difference and answer the question correctly. For the 'to draw conclusion' indicator, NS is able to understand the text entirely as well as comprehend the essence of each paragraph that, therefore, is able to draw conclusion in a simple yet exact manner.

The interview results of GN exhibit that, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, GN is able to answer correctly. For the 'to figure out messages' indicator, GN is able to fulfill it easily right after reading the text. For the 'fact and opinion' indicator, GN is able to find the facts in the text but, otherwise, hard to find the opinions provided explicitly in the text. For the 'to draw conclusion' indicator, GN is able to draw a simple conclusion.

Based on the interview results of KA, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, GN is able to analyze the text and find the main ideas of the text. For the 'to figure out messages' indicator, KA is able to fulfill it but cannot answer the related question in a completely correct manner. For the 'fact and opinion' indicator, KA is able to write down the explicit facts provided in the text but not for the the opinions, so that KA experience difficulty in dealing with the type of sentences which do not cover truth certainty. For the 'to draw conclusion' indicator, KA is able to draw a short and simple conclusion.



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The interview results of AP show that, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, AP has not been able to find the text's main ideas. For the 'to figure out messages' indicator, AP is able to write down the typical information from the text. For the 'fact and opinion' indicator, AP is able to write down the facts from the text but not for the opinions as AP still experience confusion in finding the opinions in within the text. For the 'to draw conclusion' indicator, AP has not been able to draw any conclusion correctly and appropriately.

According to the interview results of NS, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, NS have difficulty in finding the text's main ideas. For the 'to figure out messages' indicator, NS has not been able to figure out significant information that can be applied in daily life. For the 'fact and opinion' indicator, NS has not been able to completely provide the opinions as NS have difficulty in determining opinions as well. For the 'to draw conclusion' indicator, NS also has difficulty in drawing conclusion correctly and appropriately due to the inability to comprehending text in general.

The interview results of IN indicate that, for the 'to know the main ideas' indicator, IN experience confusion in finding ones since IN have not been completely able to read. Consequently, this affect the rest of the indicators, which are related to the messages, facts and opinions, and conclusion. IN definitely needs the teacher's assistance for the reading

activity and, therefore, has not been able to meet the indicators of reading comprehension skills.

The interviews were carried out to support the students' answers to the test in order to determine their reading comprehension skills on the narrative text provided by the researchers. It is found that 1) some of the students have not been able to identify main ideas in the text, 2) some have not been able to take information from the text as the messages to be applied in the daily basis, 3) some still experience confusion in determining opinions in the text, 4) some have not been able to draw conclusion correctly, and 5) some have learning difficulty due to their inability to read the narrative text well.

From the analysis of the reading comprehension skills conducted by the researchers, it can be concluded that 1 student possesses the high skills. The student is able to meet all of the reading comprehension skills indicators, understanding the text and obtaining the messages of meanings out of the text. The student enrolled in grade IV have actually been required to comprehending texts because the texts that they read are the sources of information or knowledge which provide them with the success of both the present and the future. When the students are able to do this activity, an association and experimental processes occur in their brain, then they can connect the preposition content contained in the reading material that, therefore, can



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understand the text well. In conclusion, the students who are able to understand texts are those who are going to be likely to succeed in the learning achievement since they are able to think in the systematic, logical, and creative manner.

Also, the study find that some of the students possess the medium skills in terms of reading comprehension, they are able to identify the main ideas, the message or information that can be applied in their daily life, and the facts; but have not been able to analyze the implicitly opinions in the text as well as to draw conclusions properly and correctly. These medium-skilled students are able to answer the questions but still not in a completely correct and precise way, due to their confusion experienced when answering the questions.

Moreover, this study find that some of the students possess the low skills as they still cannot meet the reading comprehension skills indicators. Among these students, some have learning difficulty because of their inability to read so that they become unable to understand the information or meaning contained in the text. For some students are still less able to read and to understand their reading, it is the duty of educators and parents to help the students change their feelings towards reading activities so that they can be motivated to master the reading skills. Consequently, In the case of students with low skills, it is found that they cannot understand the given questions well so

that their answers become incorrect and not in accordance with the reading text.

The results of the study as described above show that many factors exist in influencing one's reading skills. Haris and Sepai (1980: 5) explain that there are 4 of them, which are 1) weak reader, 2) experience of success, 3) difficult and demotivated children, and 4) unplanned reading activities. A student who is familiarized with reading activities from an early age will gain internal motivation which must also be supported by the external one from educators by applying some learning methods or models that are suitable to the learning, the attention of parents are also required by always supervising the child's development for his/her success in solving problems in daily life.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research analysis and results, it can be stated that the students' reading comprehension skills in this study can be determined from how they answered the given questions as well as their attitude towards the reading text. According to the interviews and written test on the grade IV students with the high, medium, and low level of reading comprehension skills by referring to their report card grades , it can be concluded that: 1) The students who are able to achieve the indicators come from those with the high skills, 2) the students who are able to achieve some of the specified indicators are those with the medium skills, 3) the students who have yet to reach any indicator due to several



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factors such as not being able to read and understand words well come from those with the low skills.

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