



TEACHER STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVING STUDENT LITERACY THROUGH SCHOOL CULTURE AT SAMAHANI STATE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

Reading has an important role in forming students' character. Therefore, effective strategies from teachers are very important to create an environment that stimulates students' interest in reading. This research aims to find out the strategies used by teachers in forming the character of students who like to read through the school culture of Samahani State Elementary School. This research uses a qualitative descriptive research method with observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The subjects were the principal, teachers, and students for class I to VI at Samahani State Elementary School. The data analysis technique uses data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion. Based on the results of the research that has been carried out, the teacher's strategy in forming the character of students who like to read through school culture is that three stages need to be carried out by the teacher, namely at the habituation stage the teacher carries out a 15-minute reading activity before learning begins. The aim is to encourage students to read as often as possible before learning begins. At the development stage teachers utilize libraries and reading corners as sources of student literacy. By introducing reading books. The aim is to add new insights to students, and form literacy in students. At the learning stage, the teacher presents lesson materials using varied techniques effectively. The teacher provides feedback by inviting students to attach an image media, and a special reading.

Keywords: *Improving Student Literacy, School Culture, Teacher Strategies, Elementary School, Aceh*

1. INTRODUCTION

Education is an important means of improving the quality of human resources. One of the important goals of education is to produce people with character (Rachman et al., 2023). To give birth to people with character, a long-term process is needed, especially the process carried out during education from primary to secondary education levels. Character education, there are 18 characters values, one of which is the character of being fond of reading (Jeynes, 2019). Education is a conscious effort to facilitate development and increase the potential of students. The core of education is learning activities (Flavian, 2016). Thus, educational services are the provision of various resources needed to support the condition of a good and quality learning process.

One of the factors that supports the success of education in Indonesia is students who have broad insight and knowledge, this can be realized when students have a high interest in reading. One of the activities in literacy activities, is the key to educational progress, the success of an education is not measured by the number of children who get high grades but rather the number of children who enjoy reading in the classroom (Budirahayu & Saud, 2023).

The Ministry of Education and Culture has designed a school literacy movement to help students cultivate a culture of reading and writing in the school environment (Liansari et al., 2021). The National Literacy Movement was established by the government in 2016 (Tebay, 2023). The School Literacy Movement can be a means of getting to know, understand and gain knowledge for students at school. The School Literacy Movement can also apply students' morals in everyday life. The existence of the School Literacy Movement can strengthen the movement to develop character as outlined in the Minister of Education and Culture Regulation Number 23 of



2015. One of the activities in this movement is 15 minutes of reading non-lesson books before study time begins (Simarmata & Sulistyaningrum, 2023).

The character of being fond of reading is an important character to support the progress of the Indonesian nation (Syahara et al., 2022). Most developed countries have a culture of fondness for reading. A person's low interest in reading can have a negative impact, both on themselves and on society. Low interest in reading can have a bad impact on the individual himself and the nation. The bad impact on the individual is a lack of mastery in a field of science, leading to decreased achievement, especially for students (Barber & Klauda, 2020)

In its implementation, character education likes reading is influenced by several factors. A person's interest in reading can be influenced by two factors, namely internal factors which can be in the form of a strong sense of curiosity or demanding needs such as research preparation, exam preparation, presentation preparation and others, as well as external factors which can in the form of social factors where the surrounding environment is supportive and there is interesting reading material (Mustadi & Amri, 2020).

The low character of reading is often found in the school environment, especially elementary schools (high class). As an example of the low character of reading, among others, there are still many students who are lazy about coming to the library, lazy about reading books in class, and in getting used to reading, students still must be instructed by the teacher (Murray, 2021). The problem underlying the current literacy process is the low character of students who like to read. Reading is a very important function in life. All learning processes are based on reading ability. Through reading literacy in every child, the level of success in school and life in society can open opportunities for better life success (Mulcahy et al., n.d.)

Teachers are educators who really determine the learning process in schools. A teacher is a person who provides knowledge (Yumnah et al., 2023). A teacher is someone who provides knowledge to students or professional staff who can enable their students to plan, analyze and conclude the problems they face (Fadhillah et al., 2019). Implementing student reading interest activities, the role of teachers, parents, libraries, and government is very necessary to function as a medium for students to know and understand these habituation activities better (Merga, 2021; Wicaksono, 2022). Because the habit of reading broadens students' insight. This will automatically make it easier for students to learn to achieve maximum grades.

Based on the opinion above, it can be concluded that teachers are professional educators with the main task of educating, teaching, guiding, directing, training, assessing, and evaluating students. A student needs to have a character who likes to read because the character who likes to read is a passion or liking for reading to obtain various information and insights.

Based on the results of initial observations carried out at the Samahani Public Elementary School, there were students who were still not used to it and there was a lack of interest in reading among students. This is because students still lack desire to read. Students' lack of interest in reading causes students to be slow in analyzing critically the subject matter. both in observations outside the classroom (environment) and inside the classroom. One of the things that happens is a lack of interest in reading.

Students' reading habits still must be instructed by teachers, as we know literacy is a form of character education for students at school. One of the strategies teachers can use to increase students' reading literacy is that teachers can apply 15 minutes of reading before starting the lesson, so this will help get students used to reading.

2. METHODS

Approach This research uses a qualitative approach (Bhandari, 2022) states that "qualitative research is research that produces descriptive data in the form of written data from people, phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions and thoughts of people individually or in groups". So, this research describes the teacher's strategy in forming students' reading-loving character through school culture at the Samahani State Elementary School. The subjects in this research were the principal, homeroom teacher for class I to class VI at Samahani State Elementary School, and students from class I to class VI. In this research, the researcher will stop looking for information if the



required information has been obtained and is adequate or reaches the saturation point. Data collection techniques use three methods, namely observation, interviews, and documentation. Data analysis techniques use the Miles and Huberman model, namely data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification.

3. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Based on the results of research conducted at Samahani Elementary School. The researcher stated that students from class I to class VI at Samahani State Elementary School stated that the teacher's strategy in forming the character of students who like to read through school culture was running properly, namely reading literacy activities 15 minutes before learning started. Then the teacher makes use of the library and reading corner. With the library and reading corner, students can easily increase their interest in reading with various sources of reading the books they want.

The strategy that must be carried out by teachers to make students like reading is the strategy at the habituation stage at Samahani State Elementary School which has been implemented by getting used to reading activities 15 minutes before learning begins and after learning. Next, at the development stage, the teacher involves students directly by using the library for literacy, then the teacher directly guides students in learning. The teacher forms study groups for students to hold discussions together, the teacher also directs students to learn to listen while reading, usually in theme book lessons, some students are directed to read and other students are directed to listen to reading from their friends. In this strategy, teachers usually give assignments in the form of exercises to students and do not only provide material using the lecture method. This is of course very useful and influences increasing students' ability to enjoy reading because students will learn together and solve problems by reading and understanding the material provided by the teacher.

Furthermore, the teacher's strategy at the learning stage is to utilize a literacy-rich material environment and adapt the learning material to different bills given to students, for lower classes it is still simple, such as title, author, and characterization. For the high class, bills are complex in the form of a synopsis, message, and story summary. Then the teacher invites students to listen and pay attention when the teacher is presenting material with the help of media, then students are directed and given the opportunity to write what students see in the media with the aim of encouraging student literacy.

Based on the results of interviews with school principals, teachers, and students, school culture consists of 3 indicators of a love of reading, namely the habituation stage, development stage and learning stage, which are as follows:

1. *Habituation Stage*

The habituation stage includes routine (programmed) activities, spontaneous activities, exemplary activities, and environmental conditioning activities. These are the habituation activities that are included in the school culture at Samahani State Elementary School, such as the habituation activity of 15 minutes of reading before learning begins, which is a mandatory program for all school members, then the daily school culture routine activities which are carried out on Tuesdays include reading the prayer guidance surah, on Wednesdays carrying out As-maul Husna reading activity, Thursday reading a short surah. and on Friday we do 'yasinan' reading activities.

With a series of habituation activities that are regularly scheduled and repeated every week to create an orderly, efficient, and comfortable learning environment with the aim of encouraging students to get into the habit of reading (Gardner & Rebar, 2019). There are several strategies carried out to create a positive literacy culture in



schools. One of them is creating a literacy-friendly physical environment. The physical environment is the first thing that school residents see and feel (Lee, 2020). Therefore, the physical environment needs to appear welcoming and conducive to learning.

Another aspect is other academic activities that support the creation of a literacy culture in schools. Samahani Public Elementary School has programs to support the creation of a literacy culture such as visits to the library, literacy competitions, a reading corner in the classroom, and a mobile library from the regional library.

2. *Development Stage*

Next, at the development stage for the literacy program at the development stage, reading 15 minutes before learning is accompanied by an invoice. The bills given to students at each grade level are different, for lower grades it is still simple, such as title, author, and characterization. For the high class, bills are complex in the form of a synopsis, message, and story summary. As is the case with developing a text-rich literacy environment, namely the existence of reading corners in the classroom and various other literacy activities in the form of using school libraries and mobile libraries for student literacy.

The main aspect for developing literacy skills is that students read aloud, silently, read together, or watch educational films and read material from the internet. At Samahani State Elementary School, to improve students' literacy skills, teachers invite students to use the library as a source of reading literacy both in and outside of learning. In lower classes students more often read aloud and together, in higher classes students more often read silently and aloud. Samahani State Elementary School has used the 2013 curriculum in all classes. Based on the results of interviews, the 2013 curriculum and this literacy program support each other. Apart from bills and assessments, the 2013 curriculum emphasizes literacy activities, especially reading. Every lesson must have a reading activity. Because every activity is not just the teacher lecturing, students listening but students trying and finding information themselves.

The context of the 2013 curriculum literacy learning is not only oriented towards improving cognitive abilities. More than that, literacy learning in the context of the 2013 curriculum is oriented towards developing students' attitudes, skills, and knowledge. Samahani State Elementary School where every lesson includes reading and writing activities, and telling stories. Teachers also use the library and give assignments to students such as reading, writing essays, or summarizing the lesson material given.

3. *Learning Stage*

What is different at the learning stage is that the activity of reading 15 minutes before learning is also linked to the lesson to be learned. The teacher prepares special reading that is appropriate to the lesson, so that the billing is in accordance with the lesson to be learned. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Education and Culture, which states that in the learning stage there are bills that are academic in nature (related to subjects). Reading activities at this stage are also in accordance with the 2013 curriculum, such as assignments carried out in groups, scientific assessments, and factual learning.

So, teachers need strategies to use to combine subjects. Apart from that, teachers use strategies to provide texts that are easy and understandable for students, and the reading is not long. So, literacy through school culture takes the form of holding competition activities to develop learning such as poetry reading competitions, pantuns and others that involve student literacy with the aim of encouraging and forming students who love reading.



4. CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the research results, it can be concluded that the teacher's strategy in forming students' reading-loving character through school culture at Samahani Public Elementary School has three stages that need to be carried out by the teacher, namely at the habituation stage the teacher carries out a 15-minute reading activity before learning begins. The aim is to encourage students to read as often as possible before learning begins. At the development stage teachers utilize libraries and reading corners as sources of student literacy. By introducing reading books such as knowledge books, story telling picture books, history books and others. The aim is to add new insights to students, and form literacy in students. At the learning stage, the teacher presents lesson materials using varied techniques effectively. The teacher provides feedback by inviting students to attach an image media, the teacher provides special reading that is appropriate to the learning, provides exercises so that students want to look for answers by reading books, and the teacher also holds discussions and distributes groups where students search together so that students do not feel bored with the aim of encouraging students to love reading and improving the quality of students' reading.

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