Assessment of Literacy Competence among 15-Year-Old Students in the Bandung Area

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ABSTRACT

Literacy, particularly reading literacy, holds significant importance in social life, particularly in the 21st century. This study aims to assess the literacy competence of eighth-grade students in junior high schools. It focuses on determining students' proficiency in locating textual information, evaluating students' reading literacy in comprehending texts, and appraising students' reading literacy in evaluating and reflecting upon texts. The study employed a quantitative approach, utilizing a survey-type test method with a cross-sectional survey design to facilitate one-time data collection. The assessment instruments comprise tailored AKM questions. Results indicated that students' proficiency in locating information stands at a commendable 66%, while comprehension of information is reasonably satisfactory, with 58% of students providing correct answers. However, competency in evaluating and reflecting upon texts is categorized as lacking, as evidenced by a 49% average of correct responses.

Keywords: *AKM, competence, reading literacy.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Along with the demands of the 21st century, literacy skills, especially reading literacy, play a very important role. The role of literacy is very important in people's lives because it will affect education and school quality (Diem, Purnomo, & Sofendi, 2017). The ability to read and write is needed to build a positive and creative attitude towards various life problems that can foster a sense of respect as a form of efforts to heal the nation's culture.

Literacy is a person's ability to understand and use and reflect on written readings for achieve goals as needed, develop knowledge and potential, and participate in society (Bormuth, 1973). Reading literacy is measured in relation to: (1) reading format: narrative, exposition and argumentation, forms, tables, or chart, (2) deep level of thinking. The reading process includes activities to search for information and form understanding the breadth of the text, interpreting, reflect/evaluate (content, form, and its characteristics), and (3) the context of the quotation content and the purpose of selecting quotations. Reading literacy is seen from students' ability to use written texts for certain purposes socially demanding and useful for individuals to develop their knowledge/potential. Reading is not simple decoding but combines understanding and use of written information for functional purposes (Wulanjani & Anggraeni, 2019). Geske and Ozola (2008) stated that there are factors that can fluence the literacy ability, including socioeconomic factors in the family, collaboration of a student and a family, student's reading outside the school, and students' reading at school.

The reading ability of students in Indonesia is still very low. This is evidenced by the results of tests conducted by PISA in 2018 which showed their learning outcomes that the literacy skills of students in Indonesia were still below average. Indonesian students' reading literacy skills get a score of 371, with the OECD average score being 487 (Kemdikbud, 2020). Knowing this, the Ministry of Education and Culture raises literacy as one of the main goals in its newest curriculum, namely the Independent Curriculum. The government's main objective in implementing current education policies is to improve two indicators. First, numeracy literacy which is said to be able to improve skills in mastering numbers. Second, reading literacy, which refers to an individual's ability to analyze reading and writing and understand how characters learn from the opposite perspective and the like (Marisa, 2021).

Based on the explanation above, the purpose of this study was to obtain new, accurate and certain data regarding the reading literacy competence of junior high school students using the AKM or the Minimum Competence Assessment instrument. In reading literacy competence, there is a cognitive level that can show thought processes to be able to solve existing problems (Swanson & Alexander, 1997). The cognitive process in reading literacy is divided into three levels, namely (1) finding information, searching, finding, and finding explicit information, (2) interpretation and integration to understand explicit and implied information, (3) Evaluation and reflection, to assess credibility, suitability of the text and being able to attach the contents of the text (Woolley, 2010; Kurniasih, 2021).

2. METHOD

The research method was a way to obtain a result from the data that has been obtained. The method used in this study used a survey method with a quantitative approach. In accordance with Sugiyono's views in his book, quantitative research was a research method based on the philosophy of positivism. The main objective was to test the hypothesis through the collection and analysis of quantitative/statistical data from a particular population or sample (Sugiyono, 2017). This type of research was a cross-sectional survey because it only collected the data at once. The data collection technique used was a question test in the form of AKM practice questions from the PUSMENDIK official website. The research instruments were Multiple-Choice and Complex Multiple-Choice questions from AKM practice questions. The source of the data in this study were eighth grade junior high school students at state junior high schools in Bandung City, Bandung Regency, West Bandung Regency and Cimahi City with a total of 360 students. Each city or district was represented by 90 students from three randomly selected schools. The data obtained would be processed using simple statistics, namely using formulas for processing student value data by calculating the average student score, determining the mode and the student median. The data obtained was an update on the reading literacy ability of junior high school students in Bandung Raya.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

In reading literacy, AKM is divided into three cognitive levels, namely the competency of finding information in texts, understanding texts, and evaluating and reflecting on texts. Of the 30 questions, 12 of the questions are included in the information-finding literacy competency. The questions are question numbers 1/21, 2/22, 5/25, 9/3, 14/6, 19/12, 24/20, 26/9, 27/35, 28/10, 30/32, and 34/2. At this cognitive level, students are expected to be able to describe, identify, and find an idea or information contained in the text.

This ability is an important basic knowledge for students in reading literary texts and information.

As several books that discuss the Minimum Competency Assessment (AKM) (Kemdikbud, 2020; Kurniasih, 2021; Sani, 2021) explain that reading literacy competence in finding information is included in the basic reading literacy criteria. At this level, students are expected to be able to find and retrieve explicit information contained in the text and make simple understandings. Meanwhile, students who have not been able to achieve these competencies and require intervention are categorized at the level of needing special intervention. The following figure is a graph of the correct answers of 15-year-old students from Bandung Raya in the competence to find information.
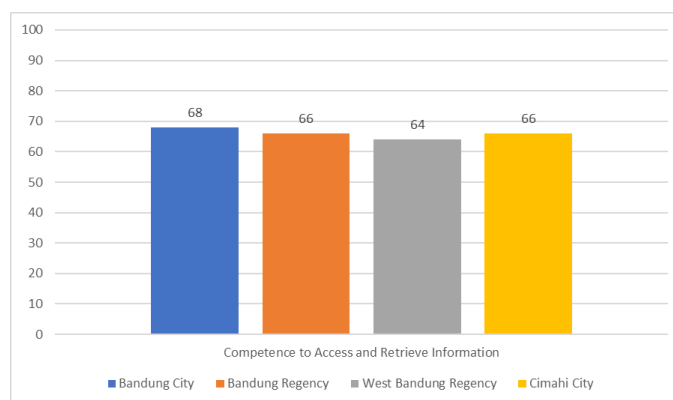

Figure 1 Competence to access and retrieve information.

As seen in Figure 1, the ability of junior high school students in Bandung Raya is included in the average category because the range is between 64-68%. Students' ability to find information has an equal percentage, meaning that there are no students in certain areas who get very high or very low percentages. The highest percentage of the four regions,

namely 68%, was obtained by junior high school students in the city of Bandung. After Bandung City, the next are students in Cimahi City and Bandung Regency with a percentage of 66%. In the last ranking, students in West Bandung Regency and Cimahi City obtained the same percentage score, namely 64%. If calculated, the average grade VIII students in finding information (to access and to retrieve) is 66%, which is included in the good criteria.

Figure 2 is a graph of competence in understanding text information. Competence to understand information is an ability that students must have. In this competency, students analyze information so that it can be described according to their understanding. Thus, the curiosity in him will arise. Because of this, competency students must be able to understand implicit information (Kemdikbud, 2020).
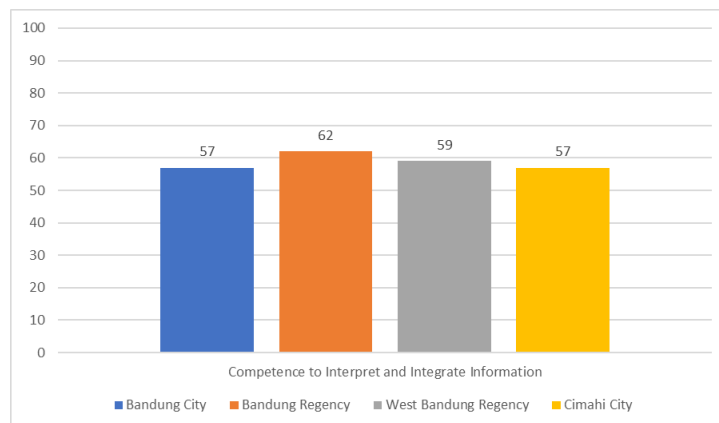

Figure 2 Competence to interpret and integrate information.

If you look at the graph of understanding information, the students' ability to understand information has an equal percentage, meaning that there are no students in certain areas who get very high or very low percentages. The highest percentage of the four regions, namely 62%, was obtained by students in Bandung Regency. After Bandung Regency, the next are students in West Bandung Regency with a percentage of 59%. And for students in Bandung City and Cimahi City, they get the same percentage score, namely 57%. The average student in Bandung Raya in understanding of information (to interpret and integrate) is sufficient because the percentage is 58%.

Judging from the results of these percentages, students' ability to understand information still needs to be improved, so the teacher's role is very important to help students when they encounter difficulties. This competency will be a benchmark for students to hone skills in the next competency. In the competence to understand information, students are only asked to process information in the text according to their understanding. while the competency of evaluating and reflecting on texts, students are asked to compare one text with another and must be able to describe the contents of the two texts. The following is a graph of students' abilities in evaluating and reflecting on text.
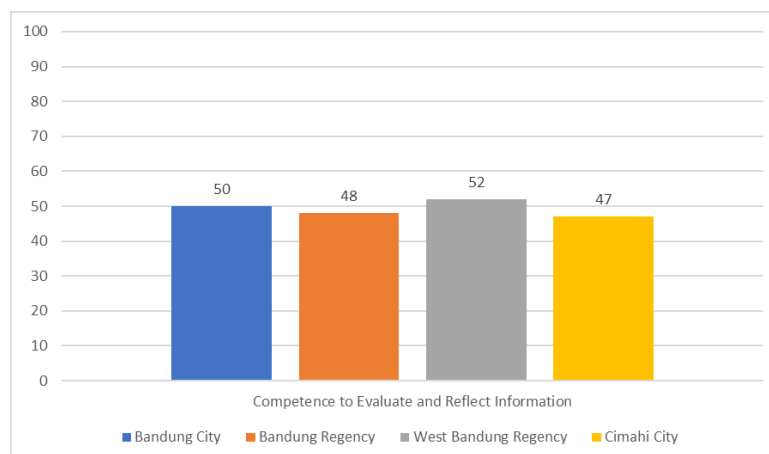

Figure 3 Competence to evaluate and reflect information.

Figure 3 is a graph that describes the results of students' reading literacy abilities in evaluating and reflecting on texts. This competency is the highest or most difficult competency of the other competencies (Sani, 2021). In addition,

in the competency of evaluating and reflecting on texts students must be able to implement a text and be described according to students' understanding of understanding a text. In this case, students usually have to compare two texts, so they will get the same conclusion (Sani, 2021).

If seen based on the graph evaluating and reflecting on the text, the percentage of scores obtained by students does not exceed 60%. The highest percentage of the four areas is students in West Bandung Regency with a score percentage of 52%, then students in Bandung City get a score percentage of 50%, students in Bandung Regency 48%, and the lowest percentage is 47% obtained by students in Cimahi City. The highest percentage, namely 52% of 100% of students, can evaluate and reflect on a text. While 48% of students have not been able to evaluate and reflect on texts, meaning that students have not been able to compare a text and have not been able to describe the results of the text they read.

Of the three competencies, the highest percentage of students is still in the competency of finding information with a percentage of 68% of 100%. While other competencies are still below 68%. Thus, students are less able to find an implicit text because in the competence to understand text information and the competence to evaluate and reflect on texts, students must be able to describe and compare texts. Therefore, the teacher has an important role to improve students' learning abilities in schools in order to make it easier for students to face learning difficulties. The results of this research are like research conducted by Linanda (2022) and Yasinta and Hamsa (2022). It was proven in this research that students were superior in the competency to finding information, followed by understanding information, then the last is evaluating and reflecting.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that students' reading literacy skills can be evaluated through the AKM instrument. Students' reading literacy competence in finding (to access and retrieve) information is included in the good criteria. This is indicated by an average of 66% of students answering correctly. Then the student competence in understanding (to interpret and integrate) information to solve AKM questions is quite sufficient, it is known from the average student who answers correctly is 58%. Furthermore, the competence of students in evaluating and reflecting is classified as lacking. This can be seen by the average student answered correctly was 49%.

Students' literacy skills are categorized into requires special interventions, basic, proficient, and competent. In category one, which requires special intervention, there is zero student in that category. Furthermore, in the second category, namely basic, there are a total of 264 students into that category. Furthermore, in the proficient category there are around 233 students in that category. The last category, namely the highest reading literacy level, competent, there are around 207 students included in that category. It can be concluded that the ability of 15-year-olds in Bandung Raya is still in the basic category.

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