

Reading Literacy Culture of Junior High School Students and the Multimedia Age Challenges

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Abstract—This study aimed to describe the culture of reading literacy of junior high school students and reading literacy in the multimedia age. This study used descriptive qualitative method. The research subjects were grade IX students of junior high schools in Bantul district. The object of this research was the culture of literacy of junior high school students and the challenges of the multimedia age. Data collection techniques consisted of observation, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. The results of this study were as follows. First, the culture in choosing the type of reading for junior high school students was literary works, namely novels and short stories. The culture of reading literacy in schools could improve due to the presence of GLS. The culture of reading literacy at home was influenced by the participation of parents in assisting and guiding their children. Second, the challenges of the multimedia era had a positive and negative impact on junior high school students who were still categorized as teenagers. Students, teachers, schools, and parents had an important role in reading literacy culture.

Keywords—reading literacy culture, junior high school students, multimedia age

I. INTRODUCTION

As human beings, we are not separated from culture. Culture is a complex matter, which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, customs, as well as the abilities and other habits of humans in a society [1]. Culture that has the characteristics repeated in doing the same thing is called habit. This form of repetition makes culture become entrenched and adhered to by the community [2]. One thing that needs habituation is literacy.

Literacy is an ability to read and write that is connected with the real world [3]. However, in this multimedia era, this term has been commonly referred to as information literacy. Information literacy is certainly obtained from reading activities. Reading skills can be understood as a person's ability to acquire, organize, and apply knowledge in an informative society. Reading skills are also considered important to be mastered in subjects and courses from various levels of education [4]. The purpose of reading include: (a) pleasure, (b) perfect reading aloud, (c) use certain strategies, (d) update his knowledge about a topic, (e) associating new information with information that has already been knew, (f) obtained information for oral and written reports, (g) confirm or reject predictions, (h) display a experiment or apply information obtained from a text in several other ways, (i) learn about the structure of the text,

and (j) answer specific questions [5]. In other words, reading literacy is seen as the most important skill to be developed by students [6].

Hartonian, US politician said: if we want to be a super power we must have individuals with much higher levels of literacy [7]. Reading and writing is the main instrument of the tradition of science which becomes a driver of change in a nation [8]. Therefore, reading culture can change the nation to become more advanced.

The culture of reading literacy can create a community that is in favour of reading and has broad insight. However, reading literacy has not become a habit and still possess some problems. Reading is an important language skills made it a habit. Without reading, people can not write. Points out that the biggest problem and fundamental in Indonesian language learning today is the concern with respect to the ability and the habit of reading and writing [9]. One of the problems of reading literacy can be seen from the results of the reading literacy test conducted by PISA.

PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) is a triennial international survey which aims to evaluate education systems worldwide by testing the skills and knowledge of 15 year old students. In 2015 over half a million students, representing 28 million 15 year olds in 72 countries and economies, took the internationally agreed two hour test. Students were assessed in science, mathematics, reading, collaborative problem solving and financial literacy [10].

The reading literacy test in the 2009 PISA showed Indonesian students were ranked 57th scored 396, while the PISA 2012 showed Indonesian students ranked 64th by having 396 of the total score. The biggest increase was in terms of scientific literacy competence, from 382 (2012) to 403 (2015). Mathematical literacy competencies increased from 375 (2012) to 386 (2015). In the year of 2012, reading literacy scored 396. Then, the score increased slightly to 397 in 2015. Therefore, attention should be given to reading literacy [11].

Various efforts have been done by the government to improve PISA results. One of them is the AKSI (Asesmen Kompetensi Siswa Indonesia) or Indonesian Students' Competency Assessment program. In addition to providing PISA tests, AKSI also provides a survey to monitor the quality of education nationally. Also, the government issued Permendikbud Number 23 of 2015 concerning the Growth of Characteristics, containing the obligation to use 15 minutes before teaching and learning process to read books other than

course books (every day) [12]. GLS cultivates schools with literate ecosystems. The reading habit is also strengthened by the syllabus of Indonesian language SMP/MTs (Junior High School/Islamic Junior High School). In one school year, students are encouraged to read at least 4 books (2 literary books and 2 non-literary books) [13].

Once the importance of emphasizing learning to read in the National Education Standards (SNP), article 6 stated the importance of emphasis and penchant for reading and writing in elementary schools. This is related to the current reality that lazy reading has plagued most Indonesian [14]. The introduction of the ability to read from an early age is expected to be a good habit until the adult child and can choose his own type of reading. Both literary and nonliterary reading, all important for student.

It is expected that reading literacy has been well developed at the end of childhood. Reaching the age of 12 years and over, children are motivated by encouragement within themselves. They like to talk, discuss and debate. At this time the child will have a formal cognitive development operation [15]. This stage of development begins to be experienced by junior high school students. They can determine what type of reading they prefer. This is particularly beneficial in today's multimedia era where various types of information access are very easy to obtain.

Considering the development of electronic media, the human world will become globally open. Thus, there are changes in the means of communication and information, changes in the ways of thinking, and even many changes in human behavior [16]. In the twenty-first century, literacy involves not just reading and comprehending the text in front of you, but a wide range of skills associated with acquiring, decoding, evaluating, and organizing information within a global electronic library. Almost all of the information that our students use in their future will be viewed with a personal information device (a computer), and it will come from a global electronic library that will be vast, largely unmanaged, and produced from a bewildering variety of perspectives. If all our children learn to do is read, they will not be literate [17].

Psychological studies show that young people are gradually turning to habits of information. They will move to reading with technology. In fact, reading books not only develops human imagination but also improves the brain function with the accumulation of knowledge gained. Next, a culture of good reading literacy can also improve individual achievement, level of development of interest in reading, self-awareness, activities and good communication skills in personality development [18].

There are several media commonly used by student. Television was the most frequent technology to be featured, followed by cameras, computers and music players. Whilst this sample was too small to develop any generalisations, there were gender patterns that emerged in that it was most often boys who were depicted using televisions and computers, whilst the technologies girls primarily used were telephones, music players and cameras. It was interesting to note that whilst new technologies were rather thin on the ground, the books did contain representations of outdated technologies. For example, both classrooms used a popular

and frequently used alphabet dictionary for this age group, which under the letter 't' included an entry for a typewriter and under 'c', a cassette tape. It is unlikely that the generation taught in these classrooms had ever seen these technologies. Whilst this limited depiction of technologies in the lives of children might seem largely irrelevant to some to the teaching and learning of reading. So, choosing the media must be careful [19].

Media literacy is important because, 1) The influence of media in our central democratic processes. In a global media culture, people need two skills in order to be engaged citizens of a democracy: critical *thinking* and self-expression. Media literacy instills both of these core skills, enabling future citizens to sort through political packaging, understand and contribute to public discourse, and, ultimately, make informed decisions in the voting booth. 2) The high rate of media consumption and the saturation of society by media. When one considers videogames, television, pop music, radio, newspapers, magazines, billboards, etc. Media literacy teaches the skills we need to navigate safely through this sea of images and messages for all our lives. 3) The media's influence on shaping perceptions, beliefs and attitudes. While research disagrees on the extent and type of influence, it is unquestionable that media experiences exert a significant impact on the way we understand, interpret and act on our world. By helping us understand those influences, media education can help us separate from our dependencies on them. 4) The increasing importance of visual communication and information. While schools continue to be dominated by print, our lives are increasingly influenced by visual images from corporate logos to building-sized billboards to Internet websites. Learning how to "read" the multiple layers of image based communication is a necessary adjunct to traditional print literacy. We live in a multi-media world. 5) The importance of information in society and the need for lifelong learning. Information processing and information services are at the core of our nation's productivity but the growth of global media industries is also challenging independent voices and diverse views. Media education can help both teachers and students understand where information comes from, whose interests may be being served and how to find alternative views [20].

Reading contributes to full intellectual and emotional development. In addition, reading can help nurture self-development and self-realization [21]. However, the culture of reading literacy is still less desirable. Multimedia challenges also influence the culture of reading literacy and these need to be evaluated.

Therefore, research is needed to find out (1) the literacy culture of junior high school students and (2) reading literacy in the multimedia era challenges. The purpose of this study is to describe the culture of reading literacy of junior high school students and reading literacy in the challenges of the multimedia era.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes proposed research method. Section III presents the obtained results and following by discussion in section IV Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. RESEARCH METHOD

This study employed descriptive qualitative method. The research subjects were junior high school students in Bantul district who were determined by random sampling. The research subjects consisted of 90 grade IX students who were successfully collected from three schools, namely SMP Negeri 2 Bantul, SMP Negeri 1 Kretek, and SMP Negeri 2 Sanden. Furthermore, the object of this study was the culture of literacy of junior high school students and the challenges of the multimedia era.

The data were collected by using several techniques including observation, questionnaires, interviews, and documentation. Observations were used to observe literacy culture in reading literary works among junior high school students, assisted by instruments in the form of diaries. Questionnaires and interviews were used to explore more information regarding literacy culture in reading literary works and its supporting factors. Interviews are conducted with Bahasa Indonesia teachers and students. Documentation was aimed to strengthen research evidence.

The analysis technique in this study was descriptive qualitative, that is by analyzing a qualitative research with a description based on the results of data collection. Then, the researcher processed, reviewed, and analyzed problems based on the results of data collection to obtain answers to the formulation of the problem.

III. RESULTS

A. Reading Literacy Culture of Junior High School Students

The culture of reading literacy of junior high school students can be seen from the results of this studies as follows.

a. Culture of Choosing Types of Reading

The types of text that students can choose to read consist of literary and non-literary texts. However, from Figure 1 it can be seen that as many as 80% of students said they liked literary reading and 20% of students preferred reading non-literary texts. As stated in GLS, students read books other than course books. Therefore, many students chose to read literary genre. Based on the results of interviews with several students, they preferred literature because it is considered as an interesting and enjoyable reading. Additionally, reading literary genre is also in accordance to the current regulations (see Figure 1).

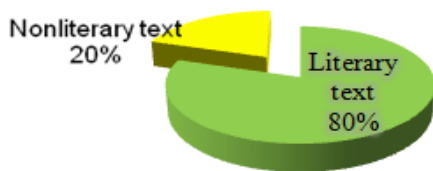


Fig. 1. Types of reading preferred by JHS students

The types of student literary readings varied. Middle school students who are mostly adolescence tended to prefer reading stories. This was especially about a story telling

about adolescence life. In Figure 2 it can be seen, students tend to like reading novels with a percentage of 34%. Furthermore, the second position is a short story with a percentage of 28% (see Figure 2).

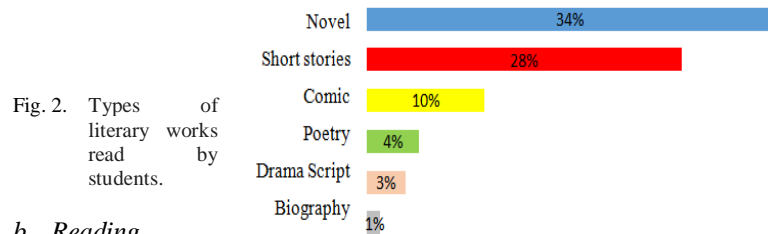


Fig. 2. Types of literary works read by students.

b. Reading Literacy Culture in Schools

The School Literacy Movement (GLS) apparently has brought its own impact on reading culture. It can be seen from figure 3 that the implementation of GLS could stimulate 72% students to work on GLS commands in accordance with school provisions. Therefore, GLS has contributed a lot in familiarizing students to conduct literacy activities every day. It is expected that by getting used to it, literacy culture could be initiated by the students themselves (see Figure 3).

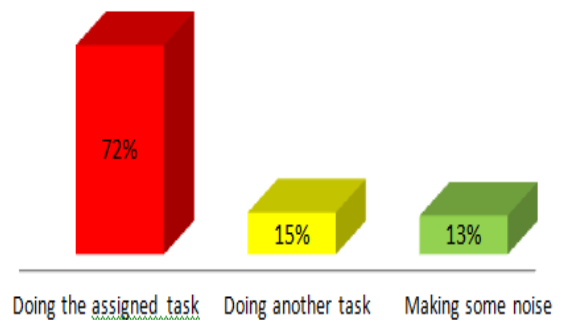


Fig. 3. Types of students' activities in joining the GLS.

The existence of GLS plays a pivotal role in increasing students' reading interests supported by the results of the GLS implementation questionnaire. As many as 62% students stated "happy and motivated in reading", while 28% of students stated "not impressed" or normal with the GLS program in their school.

c. Reading Literacy Culture at Home

Students who read books at home can be caused by high reading interest or this can be simply because of school demands. From the results of the questionnaire, it can be seen that 33% of students read every day, as much as 32% read all at once because there were school assignments, and 35% read because there would be tests or exams (see Figure 4).

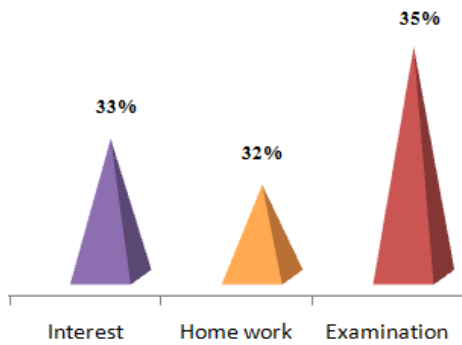


Fig. 4. Types of reading culture at home.

Based on the questionnaire about the number of books read in a week, as many as 72% of students said they read 0-2 books per week, 24% of students read 3-5 books per week, and only 4% of students read more than 5 books a week. Parents or relatives had an important role in assisting and guiding their sons and daughters. Within 24 hours, children actually spent more time at home than at school.

Based on the results of interview to the teachers, the culture of student literacy should indeed be formed starting from families. The school only helped improve. It is also proven that the results of the questionnaire accompanying parents or relatives while studying (reading). A total of 7% of students said their parents were accompanying learning every day, 80% of students stated sometimes, and 13% of students said they were never been accompanied.

B. Reading Literacy in the Multimedia Era

The existence of multimedia era or an era of disruption now certainly affects students' reading. The low level of reading books in a week can be caused by the shift of student reading's preference into cyberspace mode. Even though internet access for junior high school students is limited in the schools, students can access the internet at home or via their cell phone (see Figure 5).

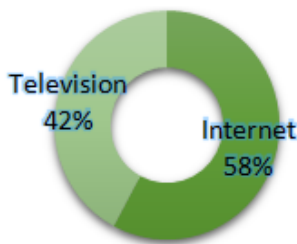


Fig. 5. Sources of literacy other than books.

Figure 5 above illustrates different sources in which students obtained literacy aside from books. As many as 58% of the students obtained it from the internet and 42% obtained literacy from television. Furthermore, there was no student choosing radio and newspaper as sources of literacy, shown in Table I below:

TABLE I. STUDENTS ACTIVITIES IN READING AND BORROWING BOOKS IN THE SCHOOL LIBRARY

No	Frequency	Percentage
1	Every day	2%
2	Once in few days	12%

3	Once in a week	1%
4	More than a week	14%
5	More than a month	50%
6	Never	21%

The school library as a literacy center has become increasingly displaced. There are many factors contributing to the downgrading aspect of school libraries. First, some schools have prepared a small library in the corner of each classroom. This facility makes some lazy students to rely on reading books from the classroom library. Second, some students complained about their library facilities. Some libraries have narrow spaces, even there are libraries that are often closed because there are no human resources to maintain. Third, there is a switch to other multimedia. It is evident in Table 1 that as many as 50% of students visited the library more than once in a month and 21% of students stated that they haven't been to the library from class VII to grade IX.

IV. DISCUSSION

The reading literacy culture of junior high school students has three discussion foci involving the culture of choosing the types of reading, the culture of reading literacy in schools, and the culture of reading literacy at home. The first aspect is the culture of selecting types of reading. Students tended to choose reading in the form of literary works rather than non-literary books. As many as 80% of students said they chose literature, while 20% of students chose non-literature books. In accordance with the GLS, students were encouraged to read books other than textbooks. This indeed brought some impacts that students chose literary reading during the GLS process. However, choosing literary readings was not only due to GLS factors. Based on the interview, it was evident that students chose reading literature because it was likely to be more interesting. This is mostly because literature presents a story that makes the readers enjoy the flow of its story line. For junior high school students, they can choose various literary titles that are appropriate to their age and have certain themes. Students like themes according to their lives. This is also justified by interviews with their teachers. Students tended to choose junior high school literary works that were appropriate to their age, growth, and language scope. It was also found that students usually liked to read fiction like novels and short stories. Regarding the percentage of types of literary work that students often read, 34% of students enjoyed reading novels. Then, 28% of students preferred to read short stories.

The second aspect is related to the culture of reading literacy in school. The culture of reading literacy in schools was closely associated to GLS. By the implementation of GLS, the reading culture in schools has increased. As many as 72% of students did their GLS activities according to the school regulations. Thus, it appeared that most students obeyed the GLS regulations and ran such program. It was also worth noting that there were 15% of the students working on other assignments and 13% of the students who were busy in the classroom. Therefore, it was considered essential to do the school's evaluation to monitor students during the GLS activities. GLS basically has been

implemented in all schools in Bantul at that time. However, the aforesaid program was implemented based on their respective school policies. Some schools even stopped doing the program because of lack cooperation between school members as well as inadequate facilities. It was also found that the reason behind their decision was that some schools believed there was no reading culture so the reading progress was not well developed. Therefore, GLS which has a positive impact is better applied in accordance with government guidelines and there is a need to make cooperation between parties including students, teachers, schools, and supported by parents.

The third important point is the culture of reading literacy at home. Many parents assumed that when they sent their children to school, the child would be smart naturally. Even if necessary, many parents provided private tutors for their children. Thus, parents felt they have provided the best support for their children. That was, in fact, not true. The role of parents at home was very important for the development of children. It was particularly because the most valuable time that students have is at home. This was where the role of parents was needed and was very important especially for children who are teenagers. According to the data, 80% of students stated they were sometimes accompanied by their parents in learning and reading, 7% of students said their parents were accompanying learning every day, and 13% of students said they had never been accompanied. In addition to the importance of mentoring parents, students' reading and learning patterns also influenced the culture of student reading literacy. The majority of students only read when there would be a test or an exam with a percentage of 35%. Students who read every day were only 33% of all students. This means that students having a high interest in reading were only about one third of the total number of students. It was supported by as many as 72% of students read 0-2 books per week. The number was very few or it could be then said no reading at all.

Laziness of reading books, of course, is also influenced by other things that students think more fun, for example playing games, watching TV, playing, or other activities at home. The multimedia era can easily change their habits. Supported by the results of this study, 58% of students obtained literacy or information from the internet and 42% obtained from television. For junior high school students who are sometimes prohibited to bring their cellphones to school, parents have occasionally provided them with the ones at home. Having the age range of 13-15 years, junior high school students are found to be able to access the internet well. This was evident by the results of interviews with several students who read literature a lot through such applications as Wattpad, Sweek, Manga, and others. Through those applications, students could choose to read short stories, novels and comics rather than buying or borrowing books in the library.

In addition to reading literary works through the internet, some students revealed that they often read news, even gossip. Considering those facts previously mentioned, much attention should be then given. The multimedia era has both positive and negative roles for students. Moreover, junior high school students are still in the unstable age category.

The internet has a good impact on improving the culture of reading literacy. However, it also has a negative impact, for example students might be exposed with negative things from the internet such as installing applications that are not age-appropriate, opening forbidden sites, consuming hoaks, and so on. Cyber crime is widespread in cyberspace and can unwittingly damage the nation's generation.

To deal with this globalized world, education needs to be given to the students. In addition to using the internet properly and providing monitoring, students are also expected to be trained in using computers. The use of computers can be useful to facilitate students in carrying out tasks. Using computers at home can make students become accustomed with technology. This will surely help students in CBT, both UNBK, AKSI, and PISA tests. If parents belong to less economic conditions, schools become a second alternative to equip students in this multimedia era. The existence of a library with adequate facilities, language laboratory, and wifi access for students is mandatory to facilitate students' progress in learning. The teachers can then monitor students in accessing information. Students are not allowed to take their cellphones to school, but they can access information through school computers.

V. CONCLUSION

Based on the present study, conclusions can be drawn as follows. The culture of choosing the types of reading for junior high school students is literary reading, particularly reading novels and short stories. The culture of reading literacy in schools can increase along with the presence of GLS. The application of GLS can be successful if there is a cooperation between various schools. The culture of reading literacy at home is influenced by the parents' participation in assisting and guiding their children. In addition, parents also need to prepare their children's literacy facilities.

The challenges of the multimedia era have a positive and negative impact on junior high school students who are still classified as teenagers. The amount of internet access that junior high school students have used can have some positive impacts such as reading literary works on the application, accessing important information, adding knowledge, and so on. However, internet also has such negative effects as the existence of dangerous sites and cyber crime. Parents and schools have an important role in providing student support facilities. However, all should be monitored. If cooperation can be established, the culture of student reading literacy will increase. Thus, students, teachers, schools, and parents have an important role in reading literacy culture.

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