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ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS' LITERACY ABILITY IN UNDERSTANDING HOTS QUESTIONS IN GRADE V AT MIN 3 MATARAM

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A B S T R A C T S

This research is motivated by students' literacy skills in understanding HOTS questions. This study aims to determine students' literacy skills, their ability to understand HOTS questions, and the obstacles they face in understanding HOTS questions in grade V at MIN 3 Mataram City. This study used a descriptive qualitative approach. The study was conducted at MIN 3 Mataram City in the 2024/2025 academic year. Data collection methods used were interviews, non-participant observation, and documentation. The data analysis process used was data reduction, data presentation, and conclusions or verification. Data validity was verified using extended observation and research, triangulation, and reference coverage. The results of this study indicate that grade VA students demonstrated low literacy skills in answering HOTS questions based on the ability indicators of analyzing (C4), evaluating (C5), and creating (C6). The largest number of students (22, 67%) fell into the low HOTS category, followed by 7 (21%), and only 4 (12%). Challenges experienced by grade VA students at MIN 3 Mataram City in understanding HOTS questions include a lack of understanding of the material and instructions. This is due to teachers rarely giving HOTS-based questions to students, who only provide HOTS questions when they are included in the worksheet.

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INTRODUCTION

Good problem-solving skills can improve student learning outcomes and achieve the overall objectives of teaching. If students are successful in solving problems, it is likely they will also be successful in solving problems related to their daily lives. Conversely, if they are unable to solve problems, it will negatively impact their learning outcomes. Children are not only required to possess lower-order thinking skills (LOTS) but also to develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS). HOTS has begun to be implemented in classroom learning and assessment with the hope that learning can further encourage the development of students' thinking skills and creativity. According to Kratwhwol & Anderson, indicators for measuring HOTS include analyzing (C4), evaluating (C5), and creating (C6).

Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) are thought processes that encourage students to discover new information and ideas in ways that foster understanding and comprehension. Higher-order thinking skills (HOTS) encompass critical, creative, collaborative, and communicative thinking. The classroom learning process should begin by encouraging students to be more active in their thinking, seeking information and ideas, thus finding solutions and connecting them to real-world problems. Students are said to have mastered or understood a subject if they have a grasp of it. Therefore, when students understand or comprehend it, they will not have difficulty answering questions. Based on this, difficulties significantly impact comprehension. Therefore, to resolve this issue, it is crucial to understand the source of the difficulties experienced by students. One way to analyze this is through test items. Identification will address the obstacles or barriers experienced by students, thereby identifying each student's potential and talents.

In the learning process, there are several differences between students who are accustomed to rote learning and those who practice higher-order thinking skills. With Higher-Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-based learning, students not only memorize information but also practice higher-order thinking skills, namely the ability to analyze, evaluate, and create. Therefore, it is crucial to train students' higher-order thinking skills so that they don't just rely on memorization but also apply the information and problems they learn to new problems.

This research focused on grade 6 students because this level of thinking aligns with children's understanding in studying literacy. This is in line with Jean Piaget's theory that intelligence changes with growth. At this stage, children can fully consider hypothetical situations, and their thinking processes are no longer dependent solely on immediate and concrete experiences. Their thinking is increasingly logical and abstract, allowing them to use probability patterns.

Based on observations and in-person interviews conducted on April 12, 2023, with teachers in Class VA of MIN 3 Mataram City, it was discovered that MIN 3 Mataram City is a school with sufficient literacy materials, as evidenced by the presence of a library, bulletin board, reading corners in each classroom, and 15-minute reading sessions. Furthermore, it was discovered that the questions given by the teachers were limited to those found in the student worksheets.

Based on the general description of the problem background above, the researcher is interested in conducting research related to the analysis of students' literacy skills in understanding HOTS-type questions. Students have the opportunity to determine the extent of their problem-solving abilities. This research can provide problem-solving experience that can measure higher-order thinking skills. Based on the explanation above, the researcher is interested in conducting a study entitled "Analysis of Students' Literacy Skills in Understanding HOTS Questions in Class VA MIN 3 Mataram City in the 2023/2024 Academic Year."

RESEARCH METHOD

A research method is a scientific method for obtaining valid data with the aim of determining, developing, and proving specific knowledge that, in turn, can be used to understand, solve, and anticipate problems in the field of education. This research is descriptive and tends to utilize analysis. It aims to describe current events or occurrences. The research process involves describing current events. This study aims to obtain information related to the ability of grade VA students to understand and solve HOTS problems at MIN 3 Mataram.

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) are stages of thinking that train students' cognitive abilities at a higher level. This involves analyzing, evaluating, and assessing learned facts and combining facts and ideas, thereby creatively creating something new based on what they have learned. In this context, students have a concrete understanding of the differences between ideas, effective argumentation techniques, effective presentation construction, in-depth understanding of complex problems, and demonstrated their ability to reason. The researcher measured students' ability to understand HOTS questions by providing HOTS practice questions to all students to determine whether their cognitive level fell into the low, medium, or high category. This was evident from the results of the questions the researcher presented in class. The ability level of class VA students was categorized as low at 67%, medium at 21%, and high at only 12%.

During the observation, the researcher observed the learning process taking place in class VA, with some students not paying attention to the teacher's explanation. The student was too busy talking to his deskmate. Even when the teacher gave practice assignments, some students didn't complete the exercises, and only a few students who were truly interested in learning were able to complete the exercises. Furthermore, at MIN 3 Mataram City, teachers were still very limited in providing HOTS-type questions to students and preferred LOTS and MOTS-type questions. This resulted in low levels of students' higher-order thinking skills.

Furthermore, students acknowledged the challenges in developing a plan for solving the problem during interviews. The research revealed that students tended to struggle with understanding the problem, making them unaccustomed to determining the appropriate method to use to answer it.

Learning using the 2013 curriculum fosters higher-order thinking skills, also known as HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skills). The application of HOTS in learning can enhance positive aspects such as the courage to face difficult problems, foster positive student-to-student collaboration, foster positive student-to-student and teacher-to-teacher interactions, engage in effective learning activities, and foster positive student character traits such as discipline, perseverance, responsibility, thoroughness, and openness.

Several studies and research have identified factors influencing HOTS, including the classroom environment, family characteristics, psychological characteristics, and intelligence.

Furthermore, Budsangkom's research revealed that classroom environmental factors, student psychology, and students' intellectual characteristics can directly influence students' HOTS, with data showing a 96.8% influence on these factors. The classroom environment can be a factor influencing HOTS. This is likely due to the conducive and comfortable classroom environment that guides students in developing skills for solving environmental problems and in the thinking process. Psychological characteristics refer to individual behavioral characteristics that can influence learning activities and thought processes, which can serve as a forum for expressing feelings in each student. Meanwhile, intellectual characteristics include competence in thinking processes and the ability to solve problems in different ways.

Based on the explanation above, the classroom environment, family characteristics, and psychological characteristics significantly influence student learning outcomes. Furthermore, the learning process provided by teachers during the learning process is also significant. Observations and interviews with fifth-grade teachers at MIN 3 Mataram City revealed several obstacles for students in solving HOTS questions. Students tend to have difficulty understanding the questions and not grasping the material.

Reasons for students not understanding the material include poor reading skills, and the teacher's delivery method is too fast, making it difficult for students to answer questions. Another cause is students not taking the lesson seriously. Many students don't pay attention when the teacher explains things in class. Some even fall asleep and chat, making the material difficult to understand.

Meanwhile, the reason students don't understand the question instructions is because the teacher never explained what a HOTS question is and what the requirements are for a HOTS question. This was confirmed by the teacher, who simply gave the HOTS questions to students. The questions given also depended on whether or not HOTS questions were included in the worksheets (LKS), so students were not accustomed to and trained to answer HOTS questions. This occurred because the teacher lacked HOTS training. Furthermore, the comprehension of Grade 6 students was considered to be lower-middle, a fact also confirmed by the teacher and homeroom teacher.

To write HOTS questions, the question writer is required to be able to determine the behavior to be measured and formulate material that will serve as the basis for statements (stimuli) in a specific context according to the expected behavior. Therefore, writing HOTS questions requires mastery of the teaching material, skill in writing questions (question construction), and teacher creativity in selecting question stimuli appropriate to the situation and conditions of the area surrounding the educational unit.

Based on Jean Piaget's theory of learning stages, students struggle to answer HOTS questions because they don't understand the material and the instructions. This is evident from research at MIN 3 Mataram City and can be explained by the fact that children's cognitive development is still classified as lower-middle. Students' difficulty answering HOTS questions stems not only from internal factors within the students themselves but also from teachers who fail to explain and familiarize themselves with HOTS questions. Teachers'

failure to familiarize students with HOTS learning and questions is a result of a lack of HOTS training.

Based on the above theory, when linked to the problems encountered in the VA class at MIN 3 Mataram City, Jean Piaget's theory of learning stages, it can be explained that the developmental stages of VA class students at MIN Mataram City are still classified as the assimilation and accommodation stages. Each student's cognitive development is still limited to utilizing newly acquired skills. The cognitive development of students has not yet reached a more complex stage of cognitive development and is unable to maintain existing cognitive abilities in a more complex process toward a scientific approach. This is why students in class VA at MIN 3 Mataram City have difficulty answering HOTS questions posed by their teachers.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the discussion in this research design, the following conclusions can be drawn: 1). The literacy skills of students in class VA at MIN 3 Mataram City are categorized as low in this study. 2). Students' ability to solve HOTS questions in class VA is still relatively low. 3). Obstacles experienced by class VA students at MIN 3 Mataram City in solving HOTS questions include: Students did not understand the material on HOTS questions, students were not accustomed to working on HOTS questions, the teacher explained them too quickly, making it difficult for students to understand the material. Most students were unfocused and tended to be lazy about reading.

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