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Eksploration of Factors Causing Low Basic Literacy Abilities in Grade III Students at SDN Karawaci 7 Tangerang City

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Abstract

This study aims to investigate the reading abilities of Grade III B students at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City, focusing on the types of reading difficulties they experience and the factors associated with their low reading proficiency. A descriptive qualitative method with an exploratory approach was employed. The participants consisted of five students identified as experiencing reading difficulties through purposive sampling, along with their homeroom teacher as a supporting informant. Data were collected through reading and reading comprehension tests using a text entitled "Sahabat," as well as interviews with the students and homeroom teacher. Data validity was established through technical triangulation, while data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, comprising data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings revealed various reading difficulties, including letter recognition, combining letters into words, accurate word pronunciation, reading fluency, punctuation usage, and reading comprehension. Several factors were associated with these difficulties, including reading habits, parental learning support at home, concentration, self-confidence, and the provision of reading guidance at school. The findings further indicate that reading fluency does not necessarily correspond to comprehensive reading comprehension. Therefore, students require continuous and gradual reading support tailored to their individual needs, supported by effective collaboration between teachers and parents.

Keywords Reading Ability; Reading Difficulties; Reading Comprehension; Basic Literacy; Elementary School

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INTRODUCTION

Education is a fundamental right of every citizen, as stipulated in Article 31, Paragraph (1) of the 1945 Constitution of the Republic of Indonesia. Through education, individuals are expected to develop their potential and acquire essential knowledge and skills necessary for everyday life. In this regard, basic education plays a crucial role in establishing the foundation for students' academic development. Three fundamental skills are particularly important in the learning process: reading, writing, and arithmetic. These competencies are commonly

categorized into literacy and numeracy skills, with reading and writing forming the core components of literacy, while arithmetic constitutes numeracy. Aryani and Hadi (2025) explain that literacy in elementary education extends beyond the ability to read and write, encompassing the capacity to understand, analyze, and evaluate information. These competencies are essential for fostering students' critical thinking skills from an early age.

Among these fundamental competencies, reading plays a particularly important role because it enables students to access, interpret, and comprehend information across various subject areas. Reading is not merely a process of recognizing written symbols but also an active cognitive activity involving the interpretation and understanding of texts and information (Munaroh et al., 2024). Similarly, Agustika (2022) emphasizes that reading is a skill that can be continuously developed through educational activities, as it serves as an essential means of communication while enhancing thinking abilities, broadening perspectives, and expanding knowledge. Students who have not developed adequate reading fluency may encounter difficulties in understanding learning materials, completing assignments, and keeping pace with classroom activities compared with their more proficient peers (Lestari & Ramadan, 2024). Furthermore, Azkiya and Ridhuan (2023) highlight that limited reading abilities can affect not only students' academic achievement but also their social interactions and psychological development. In addition to reading, writing is another essential literacy competency in elementary education, as it enables students to organize their thoughts, communicate effectively, and express ideas in written form. Nevertheless, writing remains challenging for some students because it involves complex linguistic processes. Ananda (2025) points out that students who have not mastered basic writing competencies may experience difficulties in constructing sentences, applying grammatical rules correctly, and developing consistent writing habits.

Basic literacy skills, particularly reading, therefore constitute an essential foundation for students' participation in the learning process. However, various educational assessments indicate that literacy achievement among Indonesian students remains a significant concern. According to the 2022 Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2023), Indonesian students' reading performance remained considerably below the OECD average. The results also indicated a decline compared with the previous assessment in 2018, with Indonesia's reading score decreasing from 371 to 359. This situation highlights the

continuing need to strengthen reading literacy from the early stages of education, particularly at the elementary school level, where foundational reading competencies are initially developed. Improving students' reading abilities is therefore essential to supporting their academic progress and ensuring their readiness to engage with increasingly complex learning materials.

Previous studies have examined various internal and external factors associated with reading difficulties among elementary school students. Prameswari and Subayani (2024), for instance, identified factors contributing to reading difficulties through a literature review involving 20 research articles. Meanwhile, Sipayung et al. (2025) investigated the factors associated with low reading abilities through descriptive qualitative research involving third-grade elementary school students. Although these studies provide valuable insights into the challenges of early reading development, further investigation is necessary to understand how reading difficulties manifest in individual students within specific educational contexts. Accordingly, the present study focuses on exploring the reading conditions of five students identified as experiencing reading difficulties in Class III B at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City. Unlike studies that primarily examine contributing factors in general, this research combines reading and reading comprehension test results with interviews involving students and their homeroom teacher to obtain a more comprehensive and contextual understanding of the difficulties encountered by each student and the factors associated with them.

The research was motivated by initial observations conducted during the Field Experience Practice (PPL) in Class III B at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City. The observations revealed considerable variations in reading abilities among the 30 students in the class. Based on these observations and information provided by the homeroom teacher, five students were identified as experiencing reading difficulties and requiring additional learning support. The researcher's direct involvement in teaching Indonesian Language and Pancasila Education also provided an opportunity to observe these challenges within the classroom learning environment. These circumstances encouraged further investigation into the students' reading abilities, the specific difficulties they experienced, and the factors associated with their reading development. Therefore, this study aims to explore the reading abilities of Grade III B students, identify the forms of reading difficulties they encounter, and examine the factors related to their low reading proficiency. The findings are expected to contribute to a contextual understanding of early reading difficulties and provide practical insights for teachers and schools in designing appropriate,

responsive, and student-centered reading instruction based on individual learning needs.

METHODS

This study employed a descriptive qualitative research design with an exploratory approach to investigate the factors associated with low reading abilities among third-grade students at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City. This approach was selected because it enables researchers to obtain an in-depth understanding of educational phenomena and describe the conditions experienced by students in their learning environment. Tanjung and Albina (2025) emphasize that descriptive qualitative research plays an important role in providing detailed accounts of various phenomena in the field of education. In this study, the researcher acted as the primary research instrument, observing, collecting, and analyzing information related to students' reading abilities and the factors associated with their reading difficulties. Referring to Nurrisa et al. (2025), the qualitative research process involved several interconnected stages, including research preparation, data collection, and inductive data analysis.

The research was conducted at SDN Karawaci 7, located on Jl. Cibodas Raya Perumnas 1 Karawaci, Karawaci Baru, Karawaci District, Tangerang City, Banten, Indonesia. The school was selected as the research setting because it was the location where the researcher completed teaching practice as part of the Pre-service Teacher Professional Education Program (PPG). This selection was also based on the researcher's direct experience and preliminary observations of classroom learning activities, particularly concerning the reading abilities of third-grade students. These observations provided an initial understanding of the variations in students' reading competencies and the challenges they encountered during the learning process.

The research involved 30 students from Class III B, consisting of 12 boys and 18 girls, who served as the broader classroom context for the study. However, the primary research participants were five students identified as experiencing reading difficulties based on preliminary observations and information obtained from the homeroom teacher. These five students were selected through purposive sampling because their reading conditions were relevant to the focus of the research. In addition, the Class III B homeroom teacher participated as a supporting informant to provide further information regarding students' reading abilities, classroom reading instruction, and factors associated with their reading difficulties. This selection of participants was consistent with the qualitative research perspective proposed by

Rozikin et al. (2026), which emphasizes the researcher's direct involvement in the field through observation and interaction with research participants.

The data sources consisted primarily of reading and reading comprehension test results, as well as interviews with the five selected students. The reading tests were administered to identify students' reading abilities, including their word recognition, pronunciation, and reading fluency. Meanwhile, the reading comprehension tests were intended to examine students' ability to understand and interpret the information contained in a reading passage. Interviews with the students were conducted to obtain further information about their reading difficulties, reading habits, and learning experiences. In addition, interviews with the homeroom teacher served as supplementary data to explore classroom reading instruction, students' learning conditions, family support, and other environmental factors associated with reading development. Before implementation, the reading and reading comprehension test instruments were validated to ensure their suitability and relevance to the research objectives.

Data were collected through reading tests, reading comprehension tests, and semi-structured interviews. The reading and comprehension assessments used a text entitled "Sahabat," accompanied by questions designed to examine students' understanding of the reading material. These assessments provided information about students' reading performance and their ability to identify and comprehend information in the text. Interviews were conducted with the five selected students and their homeroom teacher to explore reading difficulties, reading interests and habits, family learning support, classroom conditions, and the implementation of reading instruction. The interviews also provided contextual information that helped explain the differences observed in students' reading performance.

To ensure the credibility of the research findings, this study employed technical triangulation by comparing information obtained from different data collection techniques, particularly reading and reading comprehension tests and interviews with students and the homeroom teacher. The test results provided evidence of students' actual reading and comprehension abilities, while the interview data offered additional explanations regarding their learning experiences and factors associated with their reading difficulties. By comparing these sources of information, the researcher examined the consistency of the findings and developed a more comprehensive understanding of the students' reading conditions.

Data analysis followed the Miles and Huberman model, which consists of three main activities: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and

verification. Data reduction involved selecting, organizing, and focusing the information obtained from reading assessments and interviews according to the research objectives. Data display was conducted by organizing the relevant findings into descriptive narratives and tables to facilitate the identification of patterns in students' reading abilities and difficulties. The final stage involved drawing conclusions and verifying them by examining the consistency of the information obtained from the different data sources. The overall research process was carried out through four stages. First, the preparation stage involved determining the research focus, conducting preliminary observations, preparing reading and comprehension test instruments, and developing interview guidelines. Second, the fieldwork stage involved administering reading and comprehension tests and conducting interviews with the selected students and their homeroom teacher. Third, the data analysis stage involved reducing, displaying, and interpreting the collected information, followed by drawing and verifying conclusions. Finally, the report-writing stage involved compiling the research findings and interpretations into a research report concerning students' reading abilities, the difficulties they experienced, and the factors associated with their low reading proficiency.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of Research Findings

This study was conducted from September to October 2026 in Grade III B at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City, involving a class of 30 students. During the Field Experience Practice (PPL), the researcher was directly involved in teaching Indonesian Language and Pancasila Education, providing opportunities to observe students' learning activities and academic development. Based on preliminary observations and discussions with the homeroom teacher, Mrs. Indah, five students were identified as experiencing difficulties in reading and comprehending texts. These students were subsequently selected as the primary participants to investigate their reading abilities, identify the specific difficulties they encountered, and examine the factors associated with their reading challenges.

Data were collected through reading and reading comprehension tests using a text entitled "Sahabat," interviews with the five selected students, and an additional interview with the homeroom teacher as a supporting informant. Data credibility was established through technical triangulation by comparing the findings obtained from reading assessments and interviews with students and the homeroom teacher. Furthermore, discussions with colleagues were conducted to obtain additional perspectives and feedback during the data interpretation process. The collected data

were analyzed using the Miles and Huberman model, which encompasses data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

The interview with Mrs. Indah revealed considerable variations in the reading abilities of students in Grade III B. Although some students had developed basic reading skills, they continued to experience difficulties in understanding textual information and drawing simple conclusions from what they had read. More specifically, the five students selected for this study demonstrated different levels and forms of reading difficulties. One student, for instance, showed limited confidence when asked to read independently, whereas others had demonstrated progress in their reading abilities but continued to read hesitantly and with frequent pauses. The homeroom teacher also highlighted one student whose reading difficulties were more pronounced. These difficulties were considered potentially associated with limited learning support at home and inconsistent attendance in additional reading guidance sessions provided before regular lessons. In addition, some students experienced difficulties maintaining attention during classroom activities, as indicated by their tendency to become distracted by drawing or playing with objects around them.

To address these challenges, Mrs. Indah provided additional learning assistance before regular lessons, particularly through reading and writing activities. Students were also encouraged to participate in literacy activities at the beginning of lessons and take turns reading questions aloud. According to the homeroom teacher, continuous and repeated reading practice is essential for improving students' reading fluency and developing their confidence. This finding is consistent with Panggabean et al. (2025), who emphasize the importance of parental involvement in children's learning processes through appropriate guidance, attentive communication, and constructive support for their development. The findings suggest that students' reading difficulties are associated with several interconnected aspects, including reading fluency, reading comprehension, self-confidence, concentration during learning activities, family support, and access to additional reading assistance at school.

These preliminary findings provide an important starting point for understanding the different reading challenges experienced by the five students. However, the information obtained from the homeroom teacher alone is insufficient to explain the specific conditions of each student comprehensively. Therefore, the interview findings were further examined alongside the results of reading and reading comprehension tests and interviews with the students themselves. This

comparison enabled the researcher to identify similarities and differences among the data sources and develop a more detailed understanding of the students' reading abilities, individual difficulties, and the factors associated with their learning experiences.

Reading Fluency and Word Recognition

The reading assessments of the five selected students (Ad, Al, Ai, Ha, and Qy) revealed variations in their reading abilities, particularly in letter and word recognition, reading fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and the use of punctuation. Although some students were able to recognize and read most words independently, they continued to experience difficulties in pronouncing certain words accurately. For example, Ad pronounced "bersahabat" as "bersamabat" and "sayangi" as "sayagi." Similarly, Ai pronounced "sayangi" as "saling," while Ha mispronounced "menolong" as "menghalang," "sopan" as "sombong," and "tidak" as "kita." These errors indicate that the students had not yet fully developed accuracy in recognizing and pronouncing written words, despite having acquired basic reading skills.

Different challenges were observed in Al and Qy. Al continued to experience difficulties distinguishing between visually similar letters, particularly B and D, as well as Y and W. This difficulty affected Al's ability to recognize and read complete words accurately. Meanwhile, Qy tended to identify words by pronouncing each letter individually before combining them into a complete word. This pattern indicates that Qy still relied heavily on letter-by-letter decoding rather than recognizing words as meaningful linguistic units. These findings suggest that the two students require additional support in developing foundational reading skills, particularly letter recognition, letter-sound correspondence, and the ability to combine letters and syllables into complete words.

In terms of reading fluency, Ai and Ha demonstrated relatively smooth reading performance, whereas Ad read at a slower pace. In contrast, Al and Qy experienced greater difficulties in reading complete words independently. Differences were also identified in the students' use of punctuation. Ad and Ha occasionally recognized periods and commas but did not apply appropriate pauses consistently when reading aloud. Meanwhile, Ai, Al, and Qy had not yet demonstrated consistent attention to punctuation marks during reading activities. These findings indicate that reading proficiency involves more than recognizing letters and pronouncing words. It also requires the ability to read sentences with appropriate pauses, rhythm, and intonation to convey meaning accurately.

This finding is consistent with Sari and Zunidar (2024), who explain that punctuation plays an important role in supporting students' understanding of sentence meaning during reading. Appropriate use of punctuation helps readers identify sentence boundaries and determine where pauses are necessary. Therefore, reading instruction should be adjusted to address the specific difficulties experienced by each student. Ad, Ai, and Ha require additional practice to improve pronunciation accuracy and develop greater awareness of punctuation when reading aloud. Meanwhile, Al and Qy need more fundamental reading exercises, particularly in distinguishing letters, recognizing syllables, combining letters into words, and gradually reading simple sentences. Such differentiated support is expected to help students develop more accurate and fluent reading abilities.

Table 1. Reading Test Results

No	Students	Key Findings	Identified Needs
1	Ad	Able to recognize and read most words directly, but still struggles to pronounce certain longer words.	Loud reading practice to improve accuracy in letter recognition and word pronunciation.
2	Al	Still having trouble telling some letters apart, reading whole words, and paying attention to punctuation.	Needs practice distinguishing letters, combining syllables into whole words, and gradually reading simple sentences.
3	Ai	Able to recognize and read most words fluently. However, Ai still makes pronunciation mistakes and tends to ignore punctuation whe n reading.	It takes practice to improve word pronunciation accuracy and to read aloud while paying attention to punctuation.
4	Ha	Already able to recognize most words and read smoothly, but still not consistent in using	It requires practice in focusing and reading words accurately, as well as understanding the correct use of punctuation.

		punctuation.	
5	Qy	Still having trouble recognizing whole words and tend to spell out each letter one by one before putting them together into a word, and also still make mistakes reading certain words.	Requires practice recognizing letters, combining letters into syllables, and repeatedly reading simple words.

Source: Primary data from the reading test results of third-grade students at SDN Karawaci 7, processed by the researcher (2026).

Reading Comprehension Skills

The results of the reading and comprehension assessments involving five students (Ad, Al, Ai, Ha, and Qy) revealed differences in their abilities to understand textual information, respond to comprehension questions, and retell the content of a reading passage. Ad was able to answer several questions orally but frequently sought confirmation regarding the accuracy of the answers. Although Ad demonstrated a partial understanding of the reading material, difficulties remained in independently identifying relevant information to formulate appropriate responses. Al experienced greater difficulties in answering questions orally and retelling the content of the passage, indicating that the ability to comprehend and interpret the text had not yet developed sufficiently. Meanwhile, Ai showed initial progress in understanding the reading material and relating its content to personal experiences. However, Ai's responses remained relatively brief and had not yet developed into complete and well-structured sentences.

In comparison, Ha demonstrated a relatively better ability to answer questions orally and communicate information obtained from the reading passage. Nevertheless, the response to the third question was not entirely consistent with the information presented in the text, suggesting that accuracy in identifying specific textual information still needs improvement. Qy, on the other hand, continued to experience considerable difficulties in responding to comprehension questions. Qy tended to remain silent and appeared hesitant when asked to provide answers, often requiring initial prompting through the first two syllables of a word before

responding. Furthermore, Qy experienced difficulties understanding the reading material and retelling its content using their own words. These findings indicate that students' reading comprehension abilities differ considerably, particularly in their capacity to identify relevant information, construct oral responses, and express an understanding of a text independently.

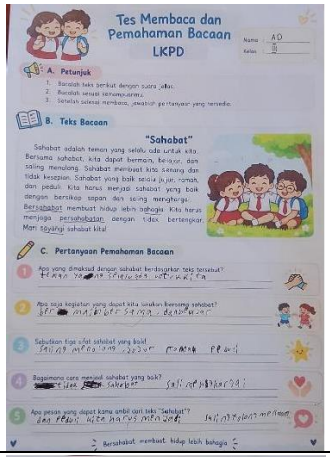
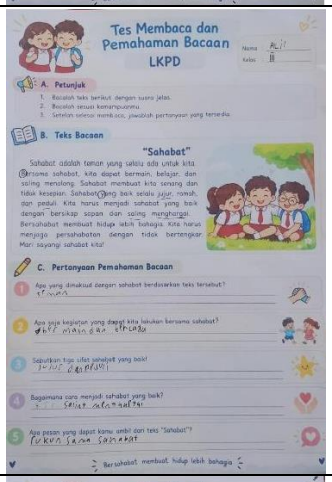
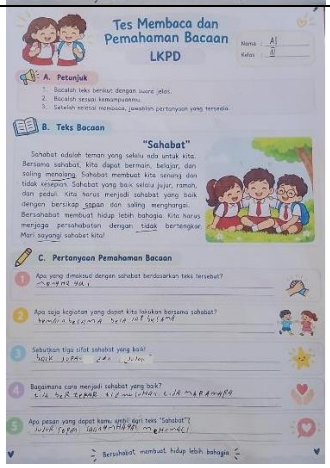
The assessment results also showed that differences in reading comprehension were accompanied by variations in students' basic reading abilities, including word recognition, reading fluency, pronunciation accuracy, and punctuation awareness. Ad had begun to recognize and read words directly but continued to read at a relatively slow pace and mispronounce certain words. Al still relied on spelling individual letters and experienced difficulties distinguishing between several letters. In contrast, Ai and Ha demonstrated relatively fluent reading abilities, although occasional pronunciation errors remained. Ai also tended to overlook punctuation marks when reading, while Ha needed further practice to improve pronunciation accuracy. Qy demonstrated more fundamental reading difficulties, particularly in recognizing complete words and combining individual letters into meaningful words. These findings suggest that students' reading challenges involve interconnected processes, ranging from basic word recognition and decoding to fluency and comprehension.

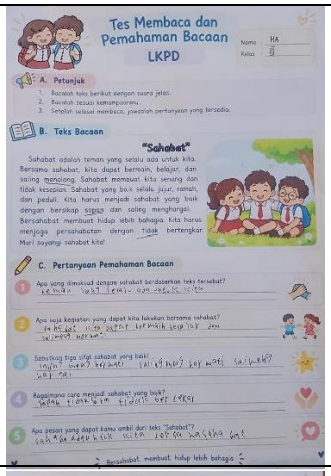
The findings further demonstrate that reading proficiency cannot be measured solely by students' ability to pronounce written words fluently. Effective reading also requires the ability to understand textual meaning, identify relevant information, formulate appropriate responses, and retell the content using one's own words. A student may demonstrate relatively fluent reading performance but still encounter difficulties in interpreting information and answering comprehension questions accurately. Therefore, reading instruction needs to address both the technical aspects of reading and the development of comprehension skills through activities tailored to individual learning needs.

These findings are in line with Nada et al. (2025), who highlight the importance of selecting instructional methods that correspond to students' learning preferences and characteristics. Their study identifies several approaches, including the Listen and Repeat and Singing methods for auditory learners, flashcards for visual learners, and writing in the air for kinesthetic learners. The application of varied instructional strategies may provide students with more accessible and engaging opportunities to develop their reading competencies. In the context of this study, Ad requires additional practice in understanding reading passages and independently

identifying relevant information. Al needs reinforcement in foundational reading skills alongside structured reading comprehension exercises. Ai requires guidance in expanding brief responses into complete sentences, while Ha needs further practice in identifying information accurately based on textual evidence. Meanwhile, Qy requires gradual and intensive assistance to strengthen basic reading skills, develop reading comprehension, and build confidence when responding to questions. Such differentiated instructional support is expected to address students' individual difficulties and promote more balanced development of reading fluency and comprehension.

Table 2. Reading Comprehension Test Results

No	Students	Oral Answer	Written Answer
1	Ad	Able to answer some questions verbally, but still often asks about the correct answer.	
2	Al	Still has difficulty understanding and conveying the content of reading material. Reading ability is still limited due to spelling out words and difficulty distinguishing some letters.	
3	Ai	Begins to understand reading material and relate it to personal experiences, but responses are still limited and not always delivered in complete sentences. Reads fluently, but still mispronounces certain words..	

4	Ha	Already able to recognize most words and read smoothly, but still not consistent in using punctuation.	
5	Qy	Still having trouble recognizing whole words and tend to spell out each letter one by one before putting them together into a word, and also still make mistakes reading certain words.	

Source: Primary data from the reading and comprehension test results of third-grade students at SDN Karawaci 7, processed by the researcher (2026).

The assessment results indicated that the five students' reading comprehension skills had not developed uniformly. Ha demonstrated a relatively stronger ability to understand the text and answer comprehension questions, although some responses were still inaccurate. Ad and Ai had begun to demonstrate an understanding of the reading material but continued to require guidance in identifying relevant information and formulating complete answers. Meanwhile, Qy and Al experienced more pronounced difficulties in understanding the text and expressing the information they had read in their own words. These differences suggest that students require varying levels of support in developing their reading comprehension skills.

These findings indicate that reading ability involves more than fluency in pronouncing written words; it also encompasses the ability to understand, interpret, and retain information from a text. Students who still rely on spelling individual letters or read at a slow pace may experience difficulties in allocating sufficient attention to understanding the meaning of the text. Conversely, students who can

read fluently may still provide inaccurate answers when they have not fully understood the information presented. This is consistent with Nada et al. (2025), who explain that reading comprehension involves not only recognizing and pronouncing words but also understanding and retaining information from reading materials. Their study identifies four levels of reading comprehension: literal, interpretive (inferential), critical (evaluative), and creative comprehension. This classification highlights that comprehension develops beyond the recognition of explicitly stated information to include the ability to interpret, evaluate, and creatively respond to textual content.

Furthermore, Kurniawan et al. (2026) found that reading fluency encompasses several essential components, including pronunciation accuracy, intonation, smoothness, and reading speed. Their study also emphasizes the importance of developing regular reading habits, supported by teacher guidance and parental involvement, to improve students' reading abilities. Taken together, these findings suggest that reading fluency and reading comprehension are closely related but represent distinct aspects of reading development. Therefore, reading instruction should address both dimensions through regular practice, appropriate instructional guidance, and continuous support tailored to each student's individual needs.

Interview Results with Students

Interviews were conducted with five third-grade students who served as research participants: Qy, Al, Ai, Ha, and Ad. The interviews aimed to explore their reading habits, learning activities at home, family support, and experiences during classroom instruction. The findings revealed variations in students' reading interests, home learning practices, and challenges encountered during the learning process.

Regarding reading habits, the students reported different preferences for reading materials. Qy expressed an interest in animal storybooks and stated that she was accustomed to reading them. Ha enjoyed reading comics, while Ai preferred animal storybooks. Ad occasionally read storybooks as well as textbooks. In contrast, Al continued to experience difficulties with reading, particularly in spelling words and recognizing certain letter combinations. These findings suggest that some students had developed interests in particular types of reading materials, such as animal stories and comics. However, an interest in reading materials does not necessarily indicate adequate reading proficiency. Therefore, students' reported reading habits need to be considered alongside the results of direct reading assessments to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of their abilities.

The interviews also revealed differences in the forms of learning assistance students received at home. Qy reported reading with her mother every day, either during the day or in the evening. Al also read with his mother in the afternoon or evening, although their study schedule was not fixed. Ha studied with his sixth-grade brother every day and received assistance from his mother when she had free time, as she also had responsibilities for caring for his younger sibling. Meanwhile, Ai stated that he generally studied independently and completed his homework without assistance. Ad reported receiving guidance from his mother when studying, although he sometimes forgot to complete his homework. These accounts illustrate varied patterns of home learning support, ranging from regular assistance from parents or siblings to independent study. Such differences provide important contextual information about students' learning experiences, although they do not establish a direct causal relationship between family support and reading performance.

In describing their learning difficulties and classroom experiences, the students reported different challenges. Al explained that he still relied on spelling individual letters when reading, sometimes confused the letters *b* and *d*, and experienced difficulties recognizing certain letter combinations. He also reported feeling uncomfortable when the classroom became noisy. In addition, Al sometimes struggled to understand the learning materials, although he stated that he was willing to ask questions when he encountered difficulties. Ai and Ha, despite demonstrating relatively fluent reading abilities, also experienced challenges during classroom learning. Ai explained that he sometimes had difficulty understanding lessons, particularly when encountering unfamiliar materials or terms. He also admitted that he sometimes found it difficult to concentrate because he enjoyed drawing. Furthermore, he was reluctant to ask questions because he feared being scolded. Ha reported that his writing skills were not yet fluent and that he sometimes had difficulty understanding the teacher's explanations. He also acknowledged being easily distracted, although he generally found the teacher's explanations understandable. Unlike Ai, Ha stated that he felt comfortable asking questions when he did not understand the material.

Ad did not specifically report difficulties with reading and stated that he was able to concentrate during classroom activities. He also expressed his willingness to ask questions whenever he encountered learning difficulties. Similarly, Qy stated that she no longer experienced difficulties with reading. However, these statements need to be interpreted in relation to the students' actual performance during the

reading assessments. In particular, a notable discrepancy emerged between Qy's self-reported reading ability and her performance in the reading test. During the interview, Qy stated that she could read fluently and no longer needed to spell individual letters. Nevertheless, the reading assessment showed that she continued to read in stages by spelling letters or syllables before combining them into complete words. This discrepancy indicates that students' perceptions of their own reading abilities may not always correspond to the skills they demonstrate during direct assessment.

Overall, the interviews provided additional insights into the five students' reading habits, home learning support, difficulties in understanding learning materials, classroom attention, and willingness to ask questions. These findings complement the reading and comprehension assessment results by providing a broader picture of the students' learning experiences. However, the interview findings alone are insufficient to establish specific factors as direct causes of low reading proficiency. Therefore, the interpretation of factors associated with students' reading difficulties should be based on the integration of all research data, including reading assessments, classroom observations, and interviews with the homeroom teacher.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research results, the reading and comprehension skills of five third-grade students at SDN Karawaci 7, Tangerang City, showed diverse conditions. The difficulties found included letter recognition, combining letters into words, pronunciation accuracy, reading fluency, use of punctuation, and understanding the content of the reading. Factors related to these conditions include reading habits, home study assistance, concentration, self-confidence, and the implementation of reading guidance at school. These findings indicate that reading ability is not only determined by the fluency of pronouncing words, but also by the ability to understand and convey information from the reading. Therefore, assistance needs to be tailored to the needs of each student through gradual and continuous reading practice.

Teachers are expected to provide individualized reading support tailored to each student's abilities and difficulties, along with repeated reading practice and simple reading comprehension activities. Parents are also expected to support the development of reading skills through consistent reading habits and home study support. Furthermore, schools need to support the implementation of sustainable literacy programs and strengthen collaboration between teachers and parents. Future

research is recommended to include more in-depth observations and additional data sources to more comprehensively explore factors related to reading difficulties.

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