Analysis of Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA) of Student Literacy Skills in Information Text Material for Junior High School Students

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Abstract:

The purpose of this research is to analyze the reading literacy skills of junior high school students based on the Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA). The participants in this study involved 50 students. The instrument used in the research referred to the types of MCA questions, which consisted of context, concepts, and levels of cognitive processes. Furthermore, 30 questions were used in this research. The method used in this research is quantitative descriptive, which only describes students' literacy skills in information text material without any specific treatment. The research subjects were selected based on cluster random sampling techniques. The data obtained through the research were analyzed with descriptive statistics by determining the average test scores of students to determine the level of students' literacy skills in information text material based on assessment criteria. The research results showed that the reading literacy skills of junior high school students are still in the low category, which is caused by a lack of experience in solving MCA question types, proficiency in information text, educational level, availability of learning resources, teaching methods, and motivation to learn. The low performance of students in reading skills needs to be a special concern, especially by educational institutions, to adjust the implementation of learning that can improve students' reading skills in information text material.

Keywords: Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA), Literacy, Information Text

INTRODUCTION

The National Assessment (NA) is a program for evaluating the education system at the primary and secondary education levels in Indonesia, including schools, Madrasah, and equivalency education programs. NA is designed to assess the quality of input, processes, and learning outcomes that reflect the performance of educational units. It provides regular, objective, and comprehensive feedback to educational unit management, local governments, and the central government.

Information on learning outcomes obtained from students includes both cognitive and non-cognitive outcomes. Cognitive learning outcomes are measured through the Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA), which assesses reading literacy and mathematical literacy or numeracy. Non-cognitive learning outcomes are measured through Character Surveys. Information about input and the learning process is obtained from Learning Environment Surveys.

MCA is a fundamental assessment needed for every student to develop their abilities and make a positive contribution to the community. The assessed abilities include indicators such as logical and systematic thinking, proficiency in using concepts and knowledge acquired during learning, and skills in filtering and processing information (Sani, 2021). MCA places a greater emphasis on two main contexts, namely literacy and numeracy. In literacy competence, it is expected that students can apply their reading, writing, and information processing skills, as well as the knowledge they possess, in their daily lives. Meanwhile, in numeracy competence, students are expected to use mathematical concepts, procedures, facts, and tools to solve complex problems in everyday life (Tju & Murniarti, 2021).

MCA is a simplification of the National Examination and only tests three subjects: language (literacy), mathematics (numeracy), and character education reinforcement. MCA questions in language (literacy) and mathematics (numeracy) will refer to the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). This perspective aligns with the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) concept through the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). As a large-scale assessment program, PISA aims not to measure students' mastery of school curriculum content but rather focuses on assessing individual capabilities in applying skills in various real-world situations. PISA is based on a pragmatic view of education, which is to prepare individuals for lifelong learning.

Therefore, PISA places high importance on real-world problem situations and students' individual capacity to enter the workforce with core skills, which include literacy and numeracy. These literacy and numeracy skills are further measured in PISA, which is subsequently known as reading literacy, mathematical literacy, and scientific literacy.

MCA aims to enhance students' abilities to think using literacy, numeracy, and character education reinforcement. However, the results of MCA are not the sole measure of success for each student, as MCA is also related to the overall quality of schools and education

(Fauziah et al., 2021). The questions presented in MCA encompass various contexts, and it is expected that students can effectively address these challenges using their reading literacy and numeracy skills. Additionally, through testing literacy and numeracy, MCA can also enhance students' high-order thinking skills (Cahyanovianty & Wahidin, 2021).

One of the topics that is assessed in the junior high school level MCA is information text, which involves drawing conclusions and observations about elements supporting materials such as graphs, tables, diagrams, images, and more. These questions must be accompanied by supporting evidence related to a text, whether it's fiction or information text with different comprehension levels at each grade level. The ability to quickly find information can be acquired by students in understanding material from graphs, tables, diagrams, and images studied in line with the basic competencies.

Informational text, or nonfiction text, is text aimed at conveying factual information to readers (Julaeha & Altaftazani, 2021). Informational text is written based on factual data, events, and other elements that genuinely exist and occur in life. Data and facts in informational text can pertain to history, society, and specific fields of knowledge that can be empirically or logically verified. The ability to understand informational text helps students comprehend natural and social phenomena in their surroundings. The skill of understanding informational text influences students' success in interacting within their social and professional environments in the future.

This understanding must be supported by the reading proficiency of each student. According to (Payana, 2021), reading is one of the activities acquired in the learning process. Furthermore, (Harianto, 2020) states that reading is not an easy process for readers; they must understand the content of the text they are about to read. Therefore, at the school level, there should be an emphasis on intensive reading instruction to broaden students' knowledge. Especially when readers aim to comprehend the content of their reading, they must first grasp the main points in the text.

This doesn't align with the expectations in the field when the author conducted interviews with teachers at schools. The information obtained indicated that students' learning outcomes in acquiring information were still low. This issue arises because teachers face difficulties in teaching in an engaging manner without relying on lectures and dependence on textbooks. The resulting impact is that students are not interested in participating in the learning activities. From the research, it is clear that the ability to find information is relatively low.

Some contributing factors include students not understanding how to find information, a lack of interest in reading, teachers not using effective teaching models resulting in less active and engaging classrooms, and teachers still relying heavily on textbooks and Student Worksheets. In line with this, research by (Witanto, 2018), (Elita & Supriyanto, 2020), and (Utami & Yanti, 2022) reveals that students' literacy levels are still

relatively low due to students being lazy to read and easily becoming bored when presented with books with extensive text.

Based on the above explanation, this research is conducted to analyze the level of student literacy skills in informational text material. This study also analyzes students' achievements at each cognitive level of literacy, allowing us to assess students' abilities in answering questions. MCA-type questions are used in this research to align with the ongoing program in Indonesia. The findings of this research can serve as a benchmark for students' literacy skills in informational text material, enabling educational institutions to tailor their teaching methods to sharpen students' literacy skills in the Indonesian language subject.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA)

The Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA) covers two core competencies: literacy and numeracy. Literacy isn't just the ability to read; it also involves the ability to analyze a text and understand the concepts behind it. Numeracy, on the other hand, is the ability to analyze using numbers. It's important to note that literacy and numeracy are not just language or math subjects; they are the skills students use to analyze various materials (Indrianti & Trihidayati, 2020). Based on this understanding, MCA is an assessment of fundamental competencies needed by all students to develop their capacities and contribute positively to society.

MCA is designed to measure literacy skills in reading and mathematical ability, also known as numeracy. The literacy assessment aims to comprehend, use, evaluate, and reflect on various types of texts to solve problems and develop individuals' capacities as Indonesian and global citizens so they can contribute to society. The numeracy assessment aims to measure the ability to think using mathematical concepts, procedures, facts, and tools to solve everyday problems in various relevant contexts as Indonesian and global citizens.

Informational Text

Informational text or non-fiction text is text designed to convey factual information to readers. Informational text is based on factual data, events, and other elements that truly exist and occur in life. The data and facts in informational text can include historical, sociological, and scientific data that can be proven empirically or logically (Nurgiyantoro, 2013). The ability to understand informational text helps students comprehend natural and social phenomena in their surroundings. The skill of understanding informational text affects students' success in interacting in their social and professional environments in the future (Julaeha & Altaftazani, 2021).

Informational text can also be defined as a collection of data or facts that have been processed and organized in such a way that they are easily understood and beneficial to the recipient.

Informational text can be accompanied by images/photos, tables, graphs, infographics, diagrams, and more. Informational text is bound by clarity, accuracy, sharpness, and truthfulness of description. It can be presented in various forms such as reviews, explanations, descriptions, analyses, explanations, and comprehensive assessments of an issue.

Informational text is intended to enhance experience and knowledge, is factual, and is straightforward. It uses scientific language, which is denotative and directly refers to its references. Its presentation is objective and logical because it's based on facts from the field of knowledge and phenomena existing in our surroundings. Examples of informational text that can be used as reading stimuli in composing MCA questions include advertisements, company/government documents (memos, invitations, contracts, notices, announcements, etc.), news, articles, reports, speeches, pamphlets, brochures, bulletins, infographics, labels (food/drugs), recipes (food/drinks), reviews (book/film/drama), scientific journals, scientific research reports, guidebooks, and editorials.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method employed in this research was quantitative descriptive, which solely describes students' literacy skills in informational text material without any specific treatment. According to (Ramdhan, 2021), quantitative descriptive research describes variables as they are, supported by numerical data generated from real-life situations. This study was conducted at Al-Azhar Middle School in Medan, involving 50 students as research subjects. The research subjects were selected using the cluster random sampling technique. The research subjects were asked to complete MCA-type graph test questions provided in a Google Forms link within a 90-minute time frame.

The instrument used in the research refers to MCA-type questions, which consist of context, concept, and cognitive process levels. Students faced 30 test questions, comprising 20 multiple-choice questions, 5 complex multiple-choice questions, and 5 essay questions. The material assessed through the test includes understanding, explaining, analyzing, and writing about the content found in informational text questions. Subsequently, the data obtained from the research will be analyzed using descriptive statistics. Descriptive statistics utilized involve determining the average test scores of students. These average scores were used to determine the level of students' literacy skills in informational text material based on the criteria below.

Criteria for Student Literacy Skills in Informational Text Material		
Criterion Scores	Achievement	MCA
$90 \leq N \leq 100$	Very High	Proficient
$80 \leq N < 90$	High	Competent
$75 \leq N < 80$	Standard	Competent
$60 \leq N < 75$	A little bit Low	Basic
$45 \leq N < 60$	Low	Requires Special Intervention
< 45	Very Low	Requires Special Intervention

Table 1. (Asesmen & Pembelajaran Balitbang dan Perbukuan, 2021)

FINDINGS

Analyzing the literacy skills of junior high school students in solving questions related to informational text material in the Minimum Competency Assessment (MCA) is a crucial step in measuring the quality of education at the middle school level. In this context, literacy encompasses not only reading and writing skills but also students' abilities to comprehend, analyze, and interpret information presented in various forms such as graphs, tables, diagrams, and images.

The analysis results indicated that the majority of junior high school students have a basic understanding of various forms of graphs, tables, diagrams, and images. However, some students still struggle to identify patterns within the material. Additionally, students' abilities to read and comprehend information presented in questions still need improvement. Students often have difficulty extracting essential information from graphs, such as relevant numbers or percentages. This underscores the need for improvements in literacy-related learning and training at the junior high school level.

In alignment with this, research on the literacy skills of junior high school students in informational text material has been conducted, and data related to students' proficiency in answering MCA questions have been obtained. Scoring criteria include multiple-choice questions with a score of 2.5 per question, complex multiple-choice questions with a score of 5 per question, and essay questions with a score of 5 per question. The results obtained indicate that students who scored the lowest dominate compared to those who scored the highest. These results are detailed in the table below.

No.	Number of Students	Score
1.	23	45
2.	17	55
3.	5	60
4.	5	75
Average		**58,75**

Table 2. Average Student Score

The data above reveals the average scores obtained by students in answering MCA questions. Both the overall and individual average score results indicate that action is needed to align with the learning objectives, particularly in achieving the minimum passing grade. The data also demonstrates that, in general, many students still achieve low learning outcomes, while the rest fall into the category of sufficient. Therefore, the students' learning outcomes in the table above are further broken down in terms of test scores and MCA achievements with the following score.

	Test Score		MCA Achievement	
Average	Highest Score	Lowest Score	Criteria	Description

58,75	75	45	low	Requires Special Intervention

Table 3. Test Scores and MCA Achievements

The data reveals that junior high school students did not yet possess strong literacy skills in informational text material. Their level of literacy proficiency in this material was relatively low. Furthermore, based on the categorization of test scores for each student, it is evident that almost all students require special intervention. This can be served as a reference for educational institutions to focus on developing students' literacy skills in graphical material according to their proficiency levels. The implementation of special interventions is expected to enhance students' literacy skills in graphical material.

DISCUSSION

Several factors contribute to the low level of literacy skills among junior high school students in graphical material. One of these factors is the format of the MCA questions; many students struggle to read and understand MCA questions. Complex question formats or difficult language can lead to students not fully comprehending well-constructed questions. Additionally, students' lack of experience in answering MCA-type questions results in them being unfamiliar with responding to such questions, leading to subpar test results. Therefore, experience is considered one of the most crucial factors in learning success (Nabillah & Abadi, 2020). Thus, making students accustomed to various question formats, both similar and different, within the context of MCA questions is essential.

Educational level also plays a significant role in students' literacy skills when it comes to solving graphical questions. Students with higher levels of education tend to have a better understanding of literacy in various types of graphics and how to interpret them. This is because MCA questions are designed for students at every grade level from VII to IX. Therefore, students in grade IX have more learning experience in comprehending informational text materials compared to students in grade VII. This is supported by research by (Paloloang et al., 2020) and (Yusnita & Abdi, 2018), which explain that the level of education influences an individual's literacy understanding.

Availability of Learning Resources: The availability of adequate learning resources also plays a crucial role in improving students' literacy skills in informational text material. Students who have access to textbooks, online materials, or other quality learning resources are more likely to understand and practice solving informational text questions. The availability of learning resources is, of course, closely tied to the involvement of educational institutions or schools. Schools, as one of the primary pillars for students, are responsible for providing quality education, including easily accessible learning resources for all students. Other research also suggests that the availability of learning resources in schools significantly impacts improving students' literacy understanding (Permata & Khusniyah, 2022) (MAKSUM, 2020) (Dewi, 2022).

Teaching Methods: The teaching methods employed by teachers can also influence students' literacy skills in solving informational text questions. Interactive teaching methods that combine theory with application can help students develop their literacy skills more effectively (Amelia et al., 2022). The application of teaching methods that align with students' characteristics, supportive learning media/tools, and the suitability of the material being taught greatly supports the effectiveness of the learning process (Kusripinah & Subrata, 2022). Thus, teachers need to carefully consider their choice of teaching methods, ensuring they are appropriate for the students' characteristics and the material being taught.

Learning Motivation: Student motivation is a psychological factor that plays a key role in their literacy skills. Students who are motivated to learn and improve their literacy skills are more likely to succeed in solving informational text questions. There are many steps a teacher can take to motivate students to take their studies seriously and enthusiastically follow every instruction provided by the teacher. In other words, the psychological state of each child in the classroom is not the same due to external environmental influences. Therefore, teachers must ensure that the learning process is more cheerful and joyful by providing and reinforcing motivation before and after the learning process (Datu et al., 2022) (Nugroho & Warmi, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the literacy skills of junior high school students in solving informational text questions in the MCA yielded several results. Among these results, it is evident that students' literacy skills in analyzing and understanding informational text still need significant improvement. Many students face difficulties in reading and interpreting data presented in the form of graphs, tables, diagrams, and images. There is a variation in the level of literacy skills among students, with some performing well in solving informational text questions, while others still encounter significant challenges.

Supporting factors to enhance students' literacy skills include the use of more interactive and practical teaching methods, as well as an improved understanding of the fundamental concepts of informational text from the early stages of learning. Further training and guidance for teachers in designing diverse and curriculum-aligned informational text questions are necessary. Collaboration efforts among teachers, parents, and students are crucial to improving reading literacy through the use of relevant learning resources and regular practice. In conclusion, the improvement of junior high school students' literacy skills in solving informational text questions in the MCA is an urgent need. With appropriate and consistent efforts, it is hoped that students will better master these skills, thus making them better prepared to face future challenges.

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