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Analysis Students' Ability to Answer Higher Order Thinking Skills Questions on Reading Test of Narrative Text in Multiple Choice Form

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ABSTRAK

Tes pilihan ganda akrab bagi Pembelajar Bahasa Inggris Asing (EFL) dan mampu mengukur HOTS siswa khususnya di Indonesia. Meskipun memiliki sejumlah keterbatasan, pilihan ganda banyak digunakan karena mampu mengukur hasil belajar dari yang sederhana hingga yang kompleks. Tujuan dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis kemampuan siswa dalam menjawab pertanyaan berorientasi Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS) dalam bentuk pilihan ganda. Dalam mengumpulkan data, peneliti menggunakan tes membaca narasi dari soal-soal yang telah dikembangkan dengan cermat oleh guru bahasa Inggris dengan fokus pada tiga domain HOTS teratas (misalnya, menganalisis, mengevaluasi, dan mencipta) dan wawancara dengan dua siswa yang diambil dari kelompok atas dan bawah. penelitiannya menggunakan metode kualitatif deskriptif. Selain itu, data yang diperoleh disortir, diverifikasi, dianalisis, diinterpretasikan, ditarik kesimpulan, dan disajikan secara deskriptif-kualitatif. Hasil penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa tidak ada satu siswa pun yang berada pada kategori sangat baik (0%), 11 siswa pada kategori baik (37%), 3 siswa pada kategori cukup (10%), 6 siswa pada kategori kurang baik. (20%), dan 10 siswa dalam kategori sangat kurang (33%). Selain itu, berdasarkan analisis kesalahan jawaban siswa diketahui persentase kesalahan jawaban siswa pada soal berorientasi HOTS yaitu menganalisis 25%, mengevaluasi 39%, dan mencipta 36%. Hal ini menunjukkan bahwa sebagian siswa kelas IX MTs Satu Atap Tangerang belum mampu menjawab soal-soal berorientasi HOTS dengan benar.

ABSTRACT

The multiple-choice test is familiar to Foreign English Language Learners (EFL) and is able to measure students' HOTS especially in Indonesia. Although it has a number of limitations, multiple choice is widely used because it is able to measure learning outcomes from the simple to the complex. The aim of this study was to analyze the students' ability to answer Higher Order Thinking Skills (HOTS)-oriented questions in a multiple-choice form. In collecting data, the researchers used a narrative reading test of questions that had been carefully developed by the English teacher with a focus on the top three HOTS domains (e.g., analyzing, evaluating, and creating) and interviews with two students who were taken from upper and lower group. his study employed descriptive qualitative method. Moreover, the data obtained were sorted verified, analyzed, interpreted, drawn conclusions, and presented descriptively-qualitatively. The findings of this study indicated that there was not a single student in the excellent category (0%), 11 students in the good category (37%), 3 students in the fair category (10%), 6 students in the poor category (20%), and 10 students in the very poor category (33%). In addition, based on analysis of students' answer errors, it was known that the percentage of students' answer errors on the HOTS-oriented questions was analyzing 25%, evaluating 39%, and creating 36%. This indicated that some ninth-grade students at MTs Satu Atap Tangerang who have not been able to answer the HOTS oriented questions correctly.

1. INTRODUCTION

For decades, reading has always been included in English proficiency test both standardized and non-standardized test. The use of reading as one of language competencies in most English examination reflects the various objectives of reading for students in real life (Karim et al., 2021; Machfuzhoh et al., 2020; Sharma & Puri, 2020). For example, when students read a narrative text, they wish to obtain entertainment and vicarious experiences as well as catch the moral values from the story. In teaching and learning process, students are practically given opportunity by the English teacher to understand types of texts including social function, generic

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structures, language features and examples as well as plenty of time for reading practice before they start to do examination (Arifin, 2020; Dewantara et al., 2022; Kahraman, 2020).

As a matter of fact, even students have plenty of time to practice reading before taking part in the examination but this does not indicate that they have mastered some reading skills and can answer Higher Order Thinking Skills (hereinafter HOTS) question correctly (Indriyana & Kuswandono, 2019; Septiana, 2021). This is because textbooks or reading exercises are not specifically geared towards mastering HOTS and students are more often presented with tests with Lower Order Thinking Skills (hereinafter LOTS) (e.g., remembering, understanding, and applying) that are considered as dangerous learning zones. (Krathwohl, 2002; Putri & Sulistyaningrum, 2021; Rohman et al., 2020). Learning which is emphasized in memory activities is usually categorized as rote learning. Rote learning happens when students are asked to remember knowledge (Adesoji, 2018; Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956; Marzano & Kendall, 2007; Michael et al., 1957). Conversely, learning process that emphasizes the process of analysing, evaluating and creating activities are classified into HOTS or meaningful learning (pedagogical zone) (Mertler & Campbell, 2005).

The definition of HOTS refers to a complex thinking process in describing material, making conclusion, building representation, analysing, and building relationship involving the most basic mental activities (Johansson, 2020; Mahanal, 2019; Novatania & Kamaludin, 2021). This skill is also utilized to underline various high-level processes according to Bloom's taxonomy level (Adesoji, 2018; Arievitch, 2020). The Bloom's taxonomy covers cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains. However, the most commonly educational objectives which taught and assessed are those in cognitive domain. It is the domain in which most of the students' abilities can be identified in it (Munawati, 2019; Putri & Sulistyaningrum, 2021).

In the last few years, the current Minister of Education and Culture, Nadiem Anwar Makariem always urges teachers to develop teaching and learning processes in school with HOTS model. The government really expects Indonesian students to achieve several competencies by implementing HOTS (Hidayah et al., 2021; Sarah et al., 2021; Widana, 2017). These competencies are critical thinking, creative and innovative, communicative skills, as well as collaboration and confidence that needed in the 21st century (Afandi et al., 2018; Diah Rusmala Dewi, 2019). The improvement of quality in learning process which oriented to HOTS at various levels of education in Indonesia is due to Indonesia's low ranking in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) compared to other countries (Hartini et al., 2018; Hidayah et al., 2021; Kusuma et al., 2017). The standard of practice questions or national examination is tried to be improved to be able to catch up.

In general, typical reading questions which made by Indonesian English teachers usually have texts of different text types and lengths. Frequently, the texts are authentic or semi-authentic (taken from magazines, story books, or newspaper, etc) and accompanied by a variety of readings tasks which is designed to test students' comprehension or a specific combination of reading skills. The most common reading test is multiple choice. Multiple choice test is easy to administer and able to measure HOTS. Multiple choice is likely to be the most familiar to English Foreign Learners (EFLs) especially in Indonesia setting (Munawati, 2019; Widiyaningsih & Septiana, 2019). Although it has a number of limitations such as time consuming in its development, ineffective to measure the ability of expressing idea, and the influence of reading ability, but multiple choice is widely used because it is able to measure learning outcomes from simple to complex, clear and structured, as well as easiness in its application (Kehoe, 1994; Sim & Isaiah Rasiah, 2006).

In fact, a number of relevant studies have been carried out to portray the overview of the use of HOTS in examinations which were conducted at several level of education in Indonesia setting. A study that concerns on analysis of HOTS in the National Examination of English on Junior High School Level reveals that they were only 6 and 9 out of 50 questions can be classified into HOTS from two National Examination models. This indicates that most of the National Examination questions in the Junior High School Level were still classified as LOTS (Widiyaningsih & Septiana, 2019). Other study focuses on description on teachers' strategies in developing students' HOTS in teaching reading skills at selected Junior High School, the strategies were: (1) asking divergent questions to the students; (2) using group discussion; (3) informing learning objectives to students; (4) giving feedback to students in order to improve their understanding on instructional materials; and (5) giving motivation and triggering students to think critically (Indriyana & Kuswandono, 2019).

However, from previous studies, there has not been a single study that has vividly investigated students' ability to answer HOTS-oriented reading questions in the form of multiple choice. With all its weaknesses, until now reading tests in the form of multiple choice are still frequently used, either formative or summative test. Therefore, this study aims to analyse students' ability to answer HOTS questions on reading test of narrative text in the form of multiple choice with a concern on the top three HOTS domains (e.g., analysing, evaluating, and creating) and an overview of the percentage of student answer errors.

2. METHOD

This study employed descriptive qualitative method because this study aimed to analyse students' ability to answer the top three HOTS domains in a multiple-choice reading test in a descriptive-qualitative manner without manipulation or other treatment. In descriptive qualitative method, the researcher collects, analyses, and interprets comprehensive narrative and visual data in order to gain insights into a particular phenomenon (Creswell, JW; Poth, 2017). In this study, there were four steps in data analysis, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and verification or drawing conclusion (Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, 2018).

In data collection, the data were gathered from two research instruments, namely a narrative reading test and interviews. The narrative reading test was designed comprehensively and systematically with questions referring to the top three HOTS domains. This test has been tried out first (validity, reliability, and practicality) before being distributed to students. In meantime, the interviews involved two students of MTs Satu Atap Tangerang which selected from upper and lower group as a criteria of purposive sampling technique (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Furthermore, for the sake of confidentiality and convenience in interpreting the interview results, the two interviewees will then be coded with QA and SH.

In data reduction, the data were reduced gradually and sorted according to the needs of this study. Then, the data were transcribed literally and interpreted thoroughly based on the category of students' reading scores to be displayed descriptively-qualitatively. The last step was verification or drawing conclusions. In this step, the data were carefully verified by correlating the findings with the literature review. Finally, the data were concluded to answer the research question.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

After giving a narrative reading test with questions referring to the top three HOTS domains to the ninth grade of MTs Satu Atap Tangerang – Banten, then the researchers checked their worksheets, tabulated and interpreted the reading scores by category. Table 1 illustrates the results of reading test.

Table 1. Students' Reading Test Scores

No	Participant	Correct Answer	Incorrect Answer	Final Score	Category
1	QA	25	5	83	Good
2	TAN	25	5	83	Good
3	FQA	23	7	77	Good
4	AAZ	23	7	77	Good
5	SN	22	8	73	Good
6	HSK	22	8	73	Good
7	LSH	22	8	73	Good
8	MNA	22	8	73	Good
9	ZPR	21	9	70	Good
10	DDM	21	9	70	Good
11	KZK	21	9	70	Good
12	EA	20	10	67	Fair
13	TGR	18	12	60	Fair
14	SAS	18	12	60	Fair
15	FSA	17	13	57	Poor
16	NP	17	13	57	Poor
17	DPS	17	13	57	Poor
18	NS	16	14	53	Poor
19	MNA	15	15	50	Poor
20	JP	15	15	50	Poor
21	MPZ	14	16	47	Very Poor
22	DAP	14	16	47	Very Poor
23	SAA	13	17	43	Very Poor
24	UN	13	17	43	Very Poor
25	FMA	11	19	37	Very Poor
26	S	10	20	33	Very Poor
27	YPA	9	21	30	Very Poor
28	MA	9	21	30	Very Poor

No	Participant	Correct Answer	Incorrect Answer	Final Score	Category
29	JNF	9	21	30	Very Poor
30	SH	9	21	30	Very Poor
	Total	**511**	**389**	**1705**	
	x̄			**57**	

Based on the Table 1, the highest score of reading test was 83 and the lowest score was 30 with mean score was 57. Furthermore, students' reading test scores were classified based on the interval class in Table 2.

Table 2. Category of Students' Reading Test Scores

Interval	Frequency	Percentage	Category
$85 \leq X \leq 100$	0	0%	Excellent
$70 \leq X \leq 84$	11	37%	Good
$60 \leq X \leq 69$	3	10%	Fair
$50 \leq X \leq 59$	6	20%	Poor
$0 \leq X \leq 49$	10	33%	Very Poor

Table 2 shows that there was no student classified into excellent category (0%), 11 students were in good category (37%), 3 students were in fair category (10%), 6 students were in poor category (20%), and 10 students were in very poor category (33%). This indicates that most students of ninth grade at MTs Satu Atap Tangerang were still unable to answer questions referring to the top three HOTS domains. In addition, the researchers also analysed the percentage of student answer errors. The distribution of students' answer errors based on the top three HOTS domains as show in Table 3.

Table 3. The Percentage of Students' Answer Errors

Thinking Skills	Indicators	Number of Questions	Mistake	Percentage (%)
1. Analyzing	Student is able to:			
	a) distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information from a narrative text	4	46	12%
	b) structure evidences in reading of narrative text	4	20	5%
	c) determine a point of view of the author in a narrative text	2	30	8%
	Total Mistake		**96**	**25%**
2. Evaluating	Student is able to:			
	a) monitor language features and generic structure of narrative text	6	89	23%
	b) judge if the resolution fits the storyline	4	62	16%
	Total Mistake		**151**	**39%**
3. Creating	Student is able to:			
	a) make hypothesis to develop storyline	5	20	5%
	b) construct a new storyline of narrative text	5	122	31%
	Total Mistake	**30**	**142**	**36%**

Based on Table 3, there were 389 total errors which divided into the top three HOTS domains with the percentage of student answer errors respectively as follows: analyzing 25%, evaluating 39%, and creating 36%. In order to obtain additional information on the difficulties and obstacles of students in doing the top three HOTS questions, the researchers dug through in-depth interviews with QA and SH which were representative of the sample of this study. Table 4 show the summary of the transcript of interview guide.

Table 4. Transcript of Interview Guide

Question	Response
1. What are your difficulties or obstacles in answering the analyzing questions?	For me, the options were so misleading that made me dizzy to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information from narrative text (#I_QA1).

Question	Response
2. What are your difficulties or obstacles in answering the evaluating questions?	To be honest, I rarely read English texts because I did not master English vocabularies and I was also not very interested in learning English (#I_SH1). Based on my experiences, narrative text was difficult to understand because the generic structure of this text was longer than other text. Moreover, at the end of story, I had to draw moral values (#I_QA2). Frankly, I was not familiar with theme of story, I can't enjoy the storyline because I did not master much English vocabularies (#I_SH2).
3. What are your difficulties or obstacles in answering the creating questions?	Basically, I was a thinker and not an imaginative learner, so it was very difficult for me to create a new storyline from a narrative text that I have already read (#I_QA3). In general, my problem was I did not understand the storyline of narrative texts because I only understood a few sentences. Besides, I never knew or read the story which were mostly taken from the foreign folktales (#I_SH3).

Discussion

In the context of education in Indonesia, the English subject for Junior High School level aims to make students have ability to communicate in spoken and written form to reach the level of functional literacy. To achieve this objective, students are expected to have good reading skills. Undeniable, reading is an essential skill for formal education that determines an individual's success in society (Alfarisy, 2021; Royce, 2021). This skill is the primary avenue to knowledge (Roldan, 2000). Especially today, reading activities cannot be separated from the lifestyle of modern humans where information is now easily accessible from various internet-based electronic audio-visual media (Breny & Mehrens, 1979; Roldan, 2000).

In fact, to have good literacy skills and HOTS is not easy for Indonesian students. This study illustrates that of the 30 students in the ninth grade of MTs Satu Atap Tangerang, there was no a single student in the excellent category (0%), 11 students in the goof category (37%), 3 students in the fair category (10%), 6 students in the poor category (20%), and 10 students in the very poor category (30%) in doing narrative reading test in the multiple-choice form which designed to refer to the top three of HOTS domains.

The number of students' errors was also very large, namely 389 with percentages details as follows: analyzing 25%, evaluating 39%, and creating 36%. In the analyzing questions, the most difficult reading questions were those that asked students to distinguish between relevant and irrelevant information from narrative texts. This is reflected in the number of students' errors which reached 46 items (12%). Data from #I_QA1 and #I_SH1 state that tricky options and lack of English vocabularies were the factors that caused the students to be unable to answer the analysis questions.

In terms of the evaluating questions, of the 6 questions that asked students to monitor language features and generic structures of narrative text, there were 89 errors (23%) which by 30 students. Based on #I_QA2 and #I_SH2, it was revealed that the complexity of generic structures, unfamiliar story themes, and the inability to draw moral values from narrative texts were factors in the failure of students to answer the evaluation questions correctly. The last is creating questions, asking students to construct a new storyline of narrative text was the most difficult questions for students to answer correctly. Moreover there were 122 mistakes out of 5 questions which made by students. In addition, based on #I_QA2 and #I_SH2, it was found that the students' inability to answer creating questions correctly was caused by students did not know the title or storyline in a narrative text and they did not have a good imagination to develop a new storyline by using their own fantasy.

In brief, although this present study has a topic that is almost the same as previous studies, namely the ability of students to answer HOTS-oriented reading questions (Lingfeng & Nair, 2021; Mahfuzah et al., 2019; Purwaningsih et al., 2021; Putra, T. K., & Abdullah, 2019). However, this study has new findings that have not been revealed from previous studies, namely there were still many students in Junior High School level who were still unable to answer the top three of HOTS-oriented questions correctly. Especially in domain of analyzing, evaluating, and creating. This was caused by several factors such as tricky options, lack or English vocabularies, complexity of generic structures, unfamiliar story titles or themes, inability to find moral values, poor imagination power to construct the new storyline in a narrative text. Therefore, this study suggests that English teachers should improve the quality of learning process by providing HOTS-oriented reading exercises to improve students' literacy skills.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on findings, it showed that there was no student who classified into excellent category, 11 students were in good category, 3 students were in fair category, 6 students were in poor category, and 10 students were in very poor category. In addition, the analysis of student errors demonstrated that there were 389 mistakes. This indicates that some students of the ninth grade at MTs Satu Atap Tangerang were still unable to answer HOTS questions correctly. This was caused by several factors such as tricky options, lack of English vocabularies, complexity of generic structures, unfamiliar story titles or themes, inability to draw moral values, poor imagination power to develop storylines of a narrative text.

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