

ANALYSIS OF DIFFICULTIES IN LEARNING TO READ FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS IN PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Abstract

Overcoming reading problems include physical and psychological disorders such as language, oral or written disorders, as well as mild motor problems and emotional disorders. Children with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, face challenges in inclusive schools, requiring special attention in processing information, especially in reading. The reading process plays a key role in understanding issues and expanding students' knowledge. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The descriptive method in qualitative research aims to explain or describe facts, data and research objects systematically, following the natural context of the situation being observed. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively by applying the Milles & Huberman analysis model. To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were used to increase data reliability as well as references from relevant sources. Research results show that learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, affect students across a wide range of academic subjects. Reading skills have an important role in the student learning process, and teaching strategies must be adapted to individual student needs. Children with special needs need holistic support from family, school and technology to overcome their learning difficulties. With a deep understanding of the difficulties in learning to read for children with special needs, effective and sustainable learning strategies can be designed to provide adequate support and improve the quality of inclusive education.

Keywords: helping learning, reading, and children with special needs

Abstract

Overcoming reading problems include physical and psychological disorders such as language, oral or written disorders, as well as mild motor problems and emotional disorders. Children with learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, face challenges in inclusive schools, requiring special attention in processing information, especially in reading. The reading process plays a key role in understanding issues and expanding students' knowledge. This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The descriptive method in qualitative research aims to explain or describe facts, data and research objects systematically, following the natural context of the situation being observed. Data collection techniques include interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively by applying the Milles & Huberman analysis model. To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were used to increase data reliability as well as references from relevant sources. Research results show that learning difficulties, such as dyslexia, affect students across a wide range of academic subjects. Reading skills have an important role in the student learning process, and teaching strategies must be adapted to individual student needs. Children with special needs need holistic support from family, school and technology to overcome their learning

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INTRODUCTION

Education is an essential need for all individuals to ensure improvement and a better quality of life. The state has the responsibility to provide superior education for all citizens, including individuals with special needs such as disabilities, as stated in Article 31 (1) of the 1945 Constitution. The roles of teachers and students are interrelated in the teaching and learning process. (Ningsih, 2022) Quality learning can be achieved if they exchange knowledge and teaching. Even so, sometimes the problems faced by students are not detected by teachers. Learning difficulties are one of the problems faced by students that require special attention from teachers.

Learning difficulties include a number of basic physical and psychological disorders, such as language, oral or written disorders that result in a number of limitations in hearing, thinking, speaking, reading, writing or doing mathematical calculations (Tarigan, n.d.). This also includes mild motor problems and emotional disorders which can be caused by unsupportive economic, cultural or environmental factors. The range of learning difficulties is very diverse and involves different disorders. A child who has learning difficulties may face different learning problems than another child who also has learning difficulties.

Children who experience learning difficulties are one of the challenges in the context of inclusive schools. They have obstacles in processing information, which can include social aspects such as difficulty understanding sarcasm, interpreting body language, or recalling information. Despite having above average levels of intelligence, these children experience difficulties in reading, writing and arithmetic. Misperceptions of letter shapes, letter sounds, or numbers are disturbing for children with learning difficulties (Ontario Rusmono, 2019).

The reading process is an activity in which the reader uses written words or language to understand the message conveyed. Reading activities have a key role in understanding issues, increasing knowledge, and broadening individual views. Through reading, students can gain knowledge that enriches their thinking and expands their knowledge.

Reading is a way to obtain information from written text, not just looking at a group of letters. It involves the process of interpreting texts to extract information for students. When teaching reading, a teacher must select reading materials that are appropriate to students' understanding and adapted to their educational level, including adjustments for students with special needs.

In elementary school, learning to read is divided into two stages: initial and advanced reading. The initial stages of reading, taught in grades I and II, are very important because they form an important foundation. Reading difficulties at this stage can make it difficult for students to understand information from various reading materials such as textbooks. Students in class I are still in the concrete operational stage, where their focus and attention develop significantly.

Teaching approaches for students in mainstream schools and those with disabilities or impairments must be adapted. For example, students with hearing impairments can be taught sign language to gain reading skills in Indonesian. Sign language helps students understand the letters of the alphabet. On the other hand, approaches to teaching reading skills for students without disabilities tend to be similar to other students.

The difference is in the methods used to help students with special needs understand the material taught by educators in reading skills. Teachers have an important role in overcoming reading difficulties by understanding where students' reading difficulties lie, especially in the difficult categories. Detecting reading difficulties early can help with more effective treatment. Based on this situation, researchers conducted research with the title " Analysis of Reading Learning Difficulties for Children with Special Needs in Elementary Schools" .

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach with descriptive methods. The descriptive method in qualitative research aims to explain or describe facts, data and research objects systematically, following the natural context of the situation being observed. The main focus of the research results is to provide a description that is not limiting and can change along with field conditions. This data is interpreted and presented in narrative or descriptive form based on facts found in the research situation (Munajah, 2021).

Data collection techniques include interviews, observation and documentation. Data analysis was carried out qualitatively by applying the Milles & Huberman analysis model. To ensure data validity, triangulation techniques were used to increase data reliability as well as references from relevant sources. The qualitative data analysis process achieves an interpretation of previously collected data. This stage begins with data collection, continues with the data reduction process by the researcher, then data display, and finally drawing conclusions based on the data that has been processed.

SYSTEM DESIGN (OPTIONAL)

Developing an optional system to overcome difficulties in learning to read in students with special needs in elementary schools can involve the use of technology and innovative learning approaches. Implementation of this design involves training for teachers to increase their understanding of effective teaching methods, which include innovative learning strategies and the use of interesting learning media. In addition, collaboration with an emotional well-being monitoring system will enable teachers and parents to respond to emotional problems that may affect a child's ability to learn to read.

The hope is that this optional system design can provide a comprehensive and integrated approach in analyzing and overcoming difficulties in learning to read in students with special needs in elementary schools.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**1. Difficulty learning**

Learning difficulties, also known as learning disabilities, refer to conditions where individuals experience obstacles in processing information and learning effectively. (Kirk, 2009) noted that children who experience learning difficulties often create confusion and paradoxes for some people. Despite having near-average or even above-average levels of intelligence, students with learning difficulties often experience significant challenges in the school environment. Despite being labeled a learning disability, they struggle to absorb course material and need additional help to succeed in school.

The group of children with learning disabilities who face difficulties in the school environment has attracted attention and caused confusion among researchers as well as practitioners in areas such as reading, speech and hearing, learning, vision, hearing, and education. Not all children with learning difficulties have similar challenges. Most of them have difficulty in reading, spelling and writing. However, some children may face difficulties in mathematics or in understanding the information and tasks given. Meanwhile, there are those who experience difficulties in almost all academic subjects.

Dyslexia is a form of disorder within the group of learning difficulties, and the International Dyslexia Association describes it as a constitutional disorder of certain languages characterized by difficulty in recognizing single words, usually indicating deficiencies in phonological processing (Pirani, 2013). These obstacles often cannot be predicted based on age or cognitive level and other academic achievements, and are not included in general developmental disorders or sensory disorders. Dyslexia is not only

limited to reading difficulties, but also involves significant problems with writing and spelling skills. Although individuals with dyslexia face difficulties in language acquisition such as reading, spelling, writing, and phonological awareness, the majority of them have strong abilities in the visual, motor, and nonverbal domains.

Education for students who experience learning difficulties requires the use of strategies that are appropriate to the specific conditions they face. Reading difficulties are one aspect of learning difficulties related to academic achievement in this category. Educators can analyze the characteristics of students based on the difficulties they face, so that they can provide appropriate solutions that suit each child's individual needs.

2. Reading skills

Learning is an educational interaction that involves interactions between teachers, students, and subject matter. The aim of each learning activity is to expand students' understanding and there is control that directs the course of the learning process. Learning refers to the knowledge gained by students as they engage in learning activities.

Reading is an action related to understanding factual and empirical information in texts with the aim of obtaining the desired information. Reading is also defined as an intellectual process to understand the contents of a text both verbally and internally. Reading activity is not just seeing the words arranged. Reading is an effort to access, interpret and understand the meaning of written language so that the message contained in the text can be conveyed clearly (Dalman, 2014).

Learning objectives in reading can be divided into two categories, namely behavioral and expressive:

Behavioral, focuses on reading activities, such as:

- a. Understand the meaning of words
- b. Develop study skills, and
- c. Understand the content of the reading text.

Expressive, focusing more on activities such as:

- a. Reading for self-direction purposes,
- b. Reading with interpretative or interpretive purposes, and
- c. Read with creativity in expression.

Reading has a significant role in children's progress, especially for students who have special needs. However, children with special needs often face difficulties in the

reading process, especially those who have hearing or vision impairments. Here are some tips to help children with special needs read:

1. Hearing impaired children:
 - Use sign language or body language to help communicate with children.
 - Use books that have pictures and writing that are clear and easy to understand.
 - Use hearing aids if your child has them.
2. Children with visual impairment:
 - Use books with big, bold letters.
 - Use visual aids such as a magnifying glass or reading light.
 - Speak clearly and describe pictures or illustrations.
3. Children with motor disorders:
 - Use books that are light and easy to carry.
 - Use props such as pillows or supports to help children hold books.
 - Help your child turn the pages of a book.

In supporting children with special needs in reading, it is important to provide them with sufficient support and patience. Children need to be given adequate time to understand the content of the book, and it is important not to force them if they feel tired or struggling. In the context of the process of learning to read at school, educators must create a learning environment that attracts students' attention to the reading material in the text. The material presented in the text must be adjusted to the level of understanding of the students concerned.

Students must be regularly trained in reading skills so they can understand the content of the text without having to rely on memorization. The role of the teacher is very important in guiding the reading learning process for students at school. As a teacher, it is important to adapt reading material to the student's level and level of education.

3. Children with Special Needs (ABK)

Children with special needs are those who experience differences in their development compared to children in general. These special needs include health, educational, social and emotional aspects that require special attention and services to fulfill. The types of special needs these children have can vary, such as:

- a. Special needs in learning, such as children with learning disorders, children with

special educational needs, etc.

b. Special needs in health, such as children with neurological disorders, physical disabilities, chronic diseases, etc.

c. Special social and emotional needs, such as children with autism, behavioral disorders, etc.

Children with special needs require special attention in providing services and support that support their growth and development. This can be done through an inclusive education approach, medical support, therapy, and social and psychological assistance. The group of learning difficulties disorders has various variants and includes a variety of disorders that are different from each other. A child who has learning difficulties may face different challenges than another child who also has learning difficulties.

In an inclusive school environment, children with learning difficulties are a group that requires special attention. They show weaknesses in processing information, which includes social skills such as difficulty understanding sarcasm, deciphering body language, or remembering information. Despite having above average levels of intelligence, they experience difficulties in reading, writing and calculation skills. The difficulties they face also include misperceptions of letter shapes, letter sounds or numbers (JKKP:, n.d.).

Dyslexia is a neurological disorder that occurs in the area of the brain that manages language, and can be found in both children and adults. Even though individuals with dyslexia experience difficulties in the learning process, this condition does not affect a person's level of intelligence. According to (Jamaris, 2014) dyslexia is a very bad disability in reading. (Mulyadi, 2010) provides a more comprehensive picture of dyslexia, which includes difficulties in reading, spelling, writing, as well as difficulties in understanding or recognizing the structure of words which can affect the learning process or learning disorders.(Jamaris, 2014) also states that "difficulty learning to read is caused by minimal dysfunction in the development of the central nervous system."

Factors that cause children to have difficulty learning to read are:

1. Internal factors

- a. Learning Disorders: Dyslexia is an example of a learning disorder that can cause children to have difficulty reading. Children with dyslexia may have difficulty recognizing letters, connecting sounds, and understanding words and sentences.
 - b. Delays in children's language skills may be a factor causing reading difficulties because they do not yet have an adequate understanding of the vocabulary and grammatical structures needed in the reading process.
 - c. Cognitive Problems: Children with cognitive problems, such as autism or below average intelligence, may have difficulty understanding and processing the information necessary for reading.
 - d. Behavioral Problems: Children who have behavioral problems such as Dyslexia may have difficulty focusing on learning to read.
 - e. Emotional Factors: Children who have emotional problems such as anxiety, depression or stress may have difficulty learning to read because they have difficulty concentrating and processing information.
 - f. Hearing Problems: Children with hearing loss are very likely to have difficulty learning to read due to difficulty in distinguishing sounds and sounds of letters.
2. External factors

In this case, supporting an environment that encourages students' interest in reading is reflected in the existence of a library that is well maintained and equipped with adequate facilities. This aims to make students feel happy and encouraged to read in the school library environment. Reading skills play a crucial role for students at the elementary level because they are one of the main skills that are essential in the learning process at school and in daily activities.

Children who have good reading skills tend to have a better understanding of subject matter and are able to improve the quality of their learning in various subjects at school. Furthermore, reading skills also have important relevance in daily activities, such as reading signs, -traffic signs, instructions and regulations in public places. Strong reading skills will help children complete homework assignments, handle school projects, and understand reading content in textbooks.

In overcoming student learning problems, teaching must consider learning methods that suit the learning styles of children who suffer from dyslexia. This is because children who experience dyslexia often have difficulty seeing letters correctly, in contrast to other children who already have a proper understanding of letter concepts.

Therefore, children who experience dyslexia are more able to adapt in the learning process if they use pictures as a tool. Here are some steps you can take to deal with this problem :

1. Recognition of letters and sounds. Educators or parents can help dyslexic children by providing exercises to recognize letters and the sounds associated with these letters.
2. Using multisensory techniques. This technique includes the use of touch, hearing, and sight to help dyslexic children understand the concepts of reading and writing.
3. Voice guidance. This technique involves voice guidance that provides sound feedback as children read, helping them recognize words and improving their reading skills.
4. Reading therapy. Reading therapy can help dyslexic children improve their reading abilities and strengthen their language skills.
5. Image-based learning. Pictures and visuals can help dyslexic children understand abstract concepts and improve their reading skills.
6. Activity-based learning. Learning with interesting activities such as games, songs and movements can help dyslexic children gain reading skills and pursue their academic achievements. (Jamaris, 2014) added that efforts to overcome reading difficulties can also be focused on improving skills in understanding reading material at the initial stage of reading.

4. Designing Assistance

- Special training given to dyslexic children

If a child is diagnosed with dyslexia, he or she will need additional support in the school environment, especially from a specialist teacher. This additional support often involves an intensive approach to reading and writing lessons. However, the presence of dyslexia should not be an obstacle for students in the learning process. This condition will not affect their intelligence level because the way their brains work is different. In fact, some individuals who experience dyslexia show a high level of creativity, have good speaking skills, and have a talent for innovative thinking or finding solutions in an intuitive way.

The specific training given and learned by children dealing with dyslexia is often related to writing skills. Some of them may face difficulty in writing due to lack of fine motor control. One step that can be taken is to provide a picture book with a dot

pattern. Children are taught to connect the dots to form pictures, which aims to train their fine motor skills.

5. Using Learning Media

One way to overcome the learning difficulties of dyslexic children is through the use of various learning media. As previously mentioned, dyslexic children are generally more responsive to material presented in the form of pictures. Therefore, using learning media in the form of pictures can be a method that helps introduce letters, distinguish letter shapes, so that in the end dyslexic children can develop reading and writing skills more fluently. Playing action video games can also help dyslexic children shift their attention more effectively between sound and visual information.

According to (Widodo, 2020), one effective and popular learning approach is using smartcard media. By using smart cards, important information can be presented in a structured and easy to understand manner. Smartcards usually consist of small cards containing questions or information on one side, and answers on the other. The repetition method involved in using smartcards helps improve memory and strengthen understanding of concepts. Apart from that, visualization of information in the form of cards also helps associate concepts with visual images, making it easier to understand and remember sentences better. With creativity in use and consistency in using flashcards, learning becomes more fun and efficient.

6. Supporting factors

- A holistic approach really helps program implementation.
- Family support: The role of the family is very important in providing emotional support, motivation and practical help to dyslexic children. Families can be a powerful source of support by providing a positive environment, encouraging children to remain self-confident, and recognizing their efforts and achievements.
- Collaboration between school and parents: Open communication between school and parents is very important. Collaboration between teachers and parents allows monitoring of children's progress, consistent use of strategies at school and at home, and the exchange of information necessary to support the academic success of children with dyslexia.
- Use of technology: Use of technology can help children with dyslexia overcome reading and writing difficulties. For example, there is special software that can help with letter recognition, reading text, and translating text to speech.

Technology can also be used to assist in organizing work, remembering deadlines, and managing schedules.

- Psychological and emotional support: Children with dyslexia often experience stress, frustration and low self-esteem due to learning difficulties. Therefore, it is important to provide them with psychological and emotional support. Supporting children's self-confidence by focusing on their successes outside of academics, such as special talents or interests, can also help them overcome the difficulties they face.
- Special guidance and support: Some children with dyslexia may need additional guidance and support. For example, a dyslexia specialist or trained tutor can provide individualized guidance in reading, writing, and other language skills.

7. Obstacle factor

Several inhibiting factors can influence the development and academic achievement of dyslexic children. Some of these inhibiting factors include:

- Delayed awareness and identification: Dyslexia is often not properly diagnosed in the early stages. Lack of awareness about the symptoms and characteristics of dyslexia can hinder early identification and timely intervention.
- Lack of understanding and support in schools: Some schools may not have sufficient knowledge about dyslexia or not provide enough resources to help children with reading and writing difficulties. Lack of special support at school can hinder the academic progress of children with dyslexia.
- Difficulty in reading and writing: Dyslexia directly affects a child's ability to read and write. Persistent reading and writing difficulties can hinder text comprehension, self-expression, and communication skills.
- Difficulty in phonological processing: Children with dyslexia often have difficulty processing and identifying language sounds associated with letters and written words. This difficulty can hinder their ability to read fluently and connect sounds with written symbols.
- Dyslexic children's memory difficulties can also affect children's ability to remember and organize information effectively. This can hinder their ability to follow instructions, remember details, and organize work.
- Lack of adaptation to a learning environment that is not friendly to children with dyslexia can hinder their accessibility to learning materials and necessary support.

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Lack of adjustments and accommodations can exacerbate the difficulties faced by children with dyslexia.

- Lack of family support can be a limiting factor for children with dyslexia. Inadequate family support can hinder a child's academic and emotional development.

CONCLUSION

Learning difficulties refer to conditions where children have difficulty understanding or absorbing learning, caused by disorders of the central nervous system or brain. As a result, children face obstacles that affect their ability to interpret information from vision and hearing, or to receive information from different parts of the brain. One example of a disorder that can hinder the learning process at school is difficulty in reading.

The hope is that with the right learning services, students with special needs can optimize their potential. There are various types of treatment that can be used to overcome learning difficulties in dyslexic children, one of which is using media as a learning tool. The role of media is very important in the learning process because it is able to convey information from students to teaching subjects effectively.

Based on the discussion that has been presented, several important points can be concluded:

1. Dyslexia is a condition of learning difficulties that primarily affects basic abilities in a particular language, such as learning words and reading, even though the child has an average or above average level of intelligence, sufficient motivation, adequate access to education, as well as vision and hearing. which is normal.
2. Symptoms of dyslexia may be difficult to detect before a child enters school, but there are some early signs that can help identify this problem. When children are of school age, teachers may be the first to notice the problem.
3. The author's efforts in guiding children with dyslexia involve understanding the child's situation, building self-confidence, as well as continuous training in reading and writing. The treatment carried out by the author for dyslexic children includes motivation, mentoring, application of learning methods and media, and language simplification.
4. The impact of the author's efforts on children's reading and writing abilities has shown improvement. Children have shown increased ability to read and write more fluently compared to conditions before the research was conducted.

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