

## Language Learning Challenges at Elementary School Age

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### ARTICLE INFO

#### Article history:

DOI:

[10.30595/pssh.v25i.1773](https://doi.org/10.30595/pssh.v25i.1773)

Submitted:

July 22, 2025

Accepted:

August 11, 2025

Published:

August 24, 2025

#### Keywords:

Teacher Competence;  
 Supervision; Teacher Behavior;  
 Teacher Preparation; Education  
 Quality; Classroom  
 Management; Professional  
 Development

### ABSTRACT

*Education is a fundamental aspect of human life, providing the foundation for the development of human resources. Teacher competence, including pedagogical, personality, professional, and social skills, plays a crucial role in shaping students' outcomes. Teachers are responsible not only for delivering knowledge but also for fostering students' character, learning ethos, and readiness for future challenges. The principal's role in organizing quality education is paramount, particularly through supervision. Supervision can enhance teachers' competence, improve classroom management, and strengthen the relationship between teachers and principals. This study investigates the comparison between teachers who receive supervision and those who do not, focusing on the impact of supervision on teacher preparation and behavior. The research adopts a qualitative descriptive approach using a case study method. Data was collected through interviews, observations, and document studies from five public elementary schools in the Diponegoro cluster, Punggelan District, Banjarnegara. The results provide insights into how supervision influences teacher performance and its role in optimizing student learning outcomes.*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Language skills in elementary school-age children play an important role in their cognitive, social, and emotional development. At this stage, children begin to develop communication skills that will be the foundation for academic learning and social interaction in the future. However, there are various challenges in language learning in primary schools, such as low interest in reading, lack of adequate reading skills, and limited relevant teaching materials. These challenges, if not addressed properly, can negatively impact children's academic and social development. Therefore, it is important to discuss effective language learning strategies to address these issues and create an environment that supports children's language development in primary school.

### 1.2 Research Objectives

This research aims to:

1. Analyze the main challenges faced in language learning in elementary school age children, especially in the aspects of reading interest, reading skills, and availability of teaching materials.
2. Identify the factors that cause low language skills in elementary school students.

3. To study and formulate effective and contextual language learning strategies to improve children's language skills.
4. Provide practical recommendations for teachers and schools in creating a conducive language learning environment.

### 1.3 Research Benefits

#### 1. Theoretical benefits

This research is expected to enrich scientific studies in the field of early childhood language education, especially in developing an effective and need-based learning approach for elementary school students.

#### 2. Practical Benefits:

- a. For Teachers : Provide reference teaching strategies that can be applied to overcome the problem of students' low interest in reading and language skills.
- b. For School :Provide an overview of the importance of providing appropriate teaching materials and learning environments that support children's language development.
- c. For Parents: Raise awareness of the importance of family involvement in children's language learning processes at home.
- d. For the Next Researcher: To be the basis and comparative material for relevant further research in the field of language learning at the elementary school level.

## 2. METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with field observation and case analysis methods. The main focus of this study is to identify the challenges faced by elementary school students in language learning, particularly in reading and writing skills.

### 2.1 Research Subjects

The subjects of this study are first-grade and upper-grade students at SDN Segaralangu 02, Cipari District. This school was chosen due to the real and observable problems related to students' low reading and writing proficiency.

### 2.2 Data Collection Techniques

Data were collected through:

- a. Direct classroom observation of teaching and learning activities.
- b. Informal interviews with classroom teachers.
- c. Observation of students' performance in reading and writing tasks.

### 2.3 Types of Data

The data collected are qualitative in nature, consisting of descriptive information about:

- a. The number of students who are not yet fluent in reading.
- b. Common mistakes in writing letters.
- c. Contributing factors to students' difficulties in language learning.

### 2.4 Data Analysis

The data were analyzed through the following steps:

- a. Identifying the main problems based on observational findings.
- b. Examining the factors that contribute to students' language learning difficulties.
- c. Evaluating the solutions that have been implemented or proposed by teachers and the school.

### 2.5 Solution Strategies

In addition to problem identification, this research also proposes several language learning strategies and solutions, including:

- a. Individualized learning support.
- b. Use of picture books and syllable-based methods.
- c. Collaboration between teachers and parents.
- d. Provision of engaging and age-appropriate reading materials.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### 3.1 Problem Observation Results

Elementary School (SD) SDN Segaralangu 02 Cipari District experienced several significant challenges in language learning, especially in reading and writing skills. From the observation results, several main problems were found:

#### 1. Reading Ability:

- a. Of the 26 1st grade students, only 10 students were fluent in reading.
- b. Other students still face difficulties in recognizing letters, Arrange syllables, and read simple words.

2. Writing Ability:
  - a. Many students make mistakes in writing letters, such as writing letters from the bottom up, which makes it difficult for them to distinguish between letters and numbers (example: the letter "b" and the number "6").
  - b. Students' writing is often unclear and untidy, suggesting that their fine motor skills are not yet fully developed.

### 3.2 Causation Study

From the analysis carried out, some of the main causative factors that may contribute to the problem are as follows:

- a. Less Effective Learning Methods: Previous teaching methods may not be appropriate for students' learning needs, especially in terms of recognition and syllables needed in reading.
- b. Differences in Learning Pace: Each student has a different pace and learning style, and this may not be fully accommodated in the learning being conducted.
- c. Lack of External Stimulation: An environment that is less supportive of reading interest can also affect the development of students' language skills. Children may not get enough stimulation or support from home or an environment outside of school.

### 3.3 Study of Solutions Conducted/Offered

Solutions Already Done:

- a. Individual Learning: Teachers provide individual reading and writing learning to students who are struggling. This approach helps identify each student's unique needs and provides more effective support.
- b. Provision of Textbooks and Readings: The school provides a variety of reading books for students who are already fluent in reading. This aims to increase students' interest in reading and encourage them to read more often.
- c. Special Learning in the Library: High-grade students who still have difficulty in reading get special learning in the library using picture books and syllable methods. It aims to strengthen reading skills with the help of visual materials.

Solutions Offered:

- a. Periodic Evaluation and Adjustment of Learning Methods: Periodic evaluations are carried out on the development of students' language skills to adjust the teaching method that best suits their needs.
- b. Increased Availability of Reading Materials: Schools are expected to enrich library collections with reading books that are more interesting and in line with students' interests, to increase their reading frequency and interest.
- c. Cooperation with Parents: Involve parents in the learning process at home so that they can provide support and motivation to children to develop language skills outside of school.
- d. Teacher Training: Provides training to teachers to improve competence in teaching languages, especially in using interesting and appropriate methods for language learning in elementary schools.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

Challenges in language learning in primary schools can be overcome through a more holistic approach to learning and involving families and school environments. The implementation of strategies such as literary-based integrated learning, early literacy introduction, and increasing the role of the family in children's education can help develop students' reading interest and language skills. Thus, collaboration between schools and families is key in supporting effective and schools need to create a language-friendly learning environment, including regular literacy programs and reading activities together.

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