

## Teacher Strategies to Overcome Initial Reading Difficulties

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### Abstract

*Purpose:* This study aims to describe teachers' strategies for addressing early reading difficulties.

*Methodology:* The research adopts a descriptive qualitative approach. Data collection techniques include interviews, observations, and documentation. The study was conducted at SD N 3 Kudi, with research subjects consisting of the school principal, a first-grade teacher, six first-grade students, and their parents. Data validity was ensured through technique triangulation and source triangulation, with data analysis conducted using an interactive model.

*Results:* The results reveal that: (1) Teacher strategies in instruction encompass lesson planning, the use of varied instructional strategies, and learning evaluation and follow-up, (2) Teacher approaches involve individual, group, and emotional approaches, and (3) Challenges to teacher strategies include factors related to interest, cognition, psychology, health, and environment.

*Applications/Originality/Value:* Teachers play a crucial role in selecting strategies to enhance reading success in the classroom. Initial reading difficulties are a challenge for teachers in determining effective strategies. Strategies that are varied and tailored to students' needs can boost motivation in learning to read. Supportive facilities, along with good communication and cooperation between teachers and parents, can significantly enhance reading skills.

### Introduction

A teacher's strategy represents the efforts made by educators to plan activities that facilitate teaching, educate, and guide students to achieve specific learning goals. The teacher's strategy in instruction is crucial, as it can directly impact the quality of learning (Azkia & Ridhuan, 2023). With the right strategies, students can easily understand the material and engage in ongoing learning activities. Without a well-planned strategy, teachers may struggle to conduct effective lessons (Anugerah et al., 2023). Classroom learning success heavily relies on teachers (Minsih & Galih, 2018). However, teaching success also depends on students' abilities (Dewi & Hi-dayat, 2022). Therefore, teacher strategies are closely linked to student learning processes and outcomes. Choosing appropriate strategies can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, ensuring that all students have opportunities for success. To foster student interest, teachers need more than engaging assignments or discussions; they must support skill development (Kikas et al., 2016). Teachers must plan and determine specific strategies to address learning challenges encountered in the classroom.

One common issue encountered in primary schools is reading. Reading is an activity that involves looking at and processing written words, either aloud or silently (Azizah & Rahmawati, 2022). Reading broadens one's horizons and knowledge. It is a vital skill for everyday life, helping individuals interpret signs or rules in their environment (Hilda Melani Purba et al., 2023). In education, the goal of reading is to enable students to transform letters into meaningful sounds and to understand the content effectively (Asip et al., 2022). According to Lestari et al. (2021), learning to read in primary school consists of two stages: beginning reading and advanced reading. The first stage, focusing on beginning reading, is specifically taught to younger grades as it introduces fundamental reading concepts. Emmi (2019) explains that beginning reading is an initial phase where children enjoy reading, can read images and labels, and recognize letters and simple words. This phase serves as the foundation for students' reading skills at later stages. Success in learning is influenced by early reading abilities (Destian et al., 2022), though not all students are proficient at this stage.

Common early reading challenges include difficulty distinguishing consonants from vowels, trouble identifying and pronouncing certain letters, struggles with reading syllables or words with affixes, and in some cases, complete inability to read. Windrawati et al. (2020) found that 11 out of 29 first-grade students at SD Inpres 141 Kota Sorong had difficulty distinguishing letter shapes and pronouncing letters, and were unable to arrange letters into words. Rahma & Dafit (2021) found that 10 of 21 first-grade students at SD N 002 Pulau Baru Kopah struggled with letter recognition, reading syllables, and often repeated words. Similarly, Huduni et al. (2022) observed that 6 out of 10 students in first grade at SD N 3 Daerek struggled to recognize letters. Initial reading difficulties often stem from a lack of reading practice in earlier education stages or insufficient reading guidance from parents at home. Additionally, certain letters or words can be challenging due to similar pronunciations or shapes, leading to frequent confusion.

Ideally, reading skills should be introduced before children enter primary school, through early childhood education or by parents at home. Lestari & Rah-mawati (2022) argue that parental involvement forms the foundation for children's learning. Astuti et al. (2024) also emphasize the importance of parents in establishing literacy habits and instilling responsibility in children. Parents play a primary role in their children's education, influencing learning that extends throughout life (Okello, 2023). However, some parents still believe that reading skills should only be learned at school, leading to situations where first-grade teachers encounter children who struggle with reading or who lack letter recognition entirely.

Educators and the educational environment are crucial factors that impact students with reading difficulties (Claessen et al., 2020). Coltheart (2015) highlights cognitive factors as a consistent challenge for students who struggle with reading. Every student's cognitive system is unique, resulting in different rates of thinking and acting. The diverse needs and development levels of students require that teachers carefully plan, consistently implement, and periodically evaluate their strategies to ensure these needs are met. Prasetya et al. (2022) suggest that instructional models play an essential role in fostering early reading interest. Therefore, strategies that encourage engaging and adaptive reading practice are needed to accommodate students' needs.

Teachers can adopt various strategies to address reading difficulties, such as implementing diverse teaching methods or utilizing supportive media. Azkia & Ridhuan (2023) propose that teachers can tackle initial reading challenges by employing strategies like: a) alphabet strategy; b) letter card strategy; c) spelling strategy; and d) dictation strategy. In the learning process, the use of media, instructional strategies, and teacher approaches must be balanced. Susanti (2018) found that while letter cards are beneficial, they have limitations due to their simplicity, limited scope, and focus on visual perception. Unlike teachers, instructional media cannot interact with or possess a personal understanding of students (Titin et al., 2023). Though instructional media facilitates material delivery, the teacher's role remains paramount in its application. Without competent resources, tools and media cannot perform optimally (Merlita et al., 2023). Teachers' guidance and support are essential to ensure effective material delivery.

Strong reading skills in the early stages lay a crucial foundation for future academic capabilities. Students who do not receive early guidance may encounter increasingly complex challenges as they progress. Teachers' strategies play a vital role in shaping the learning process that students experience. Without the right strategies, students' reading difficulties may persist, potentially impacting their broader learning and development.

## Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive qualitative approach, conducted at SD N 3 Kudi. The focus is on teachers' strategies for addressing early reading difficulties, while research subjects include the principal, first-grade teacher, six first-grade students, and their parents. Data collection methods include interviews, observations, and documentation. Observations took place during Indonesian language lessons focused on reading skills. Interviews covered teachers' strategies for addressing reading difficulties, including factors that hinder and support these strategies, as well as solutions applied. Documentation included field notes, relevant documents, and photos taken during the research process.

Data validation was performed using technique triangulation and source triangulation. Data analysis followed an interactive approach with three main stages: 1) **Data Reduction**, which involved selecting data related to teachers' strategies for addressing early reading challenges, including instructional and approach strategies, along with supportive and hindering factors; 2) **Data Presentation**, which provided a concise overview of teacher strategies for managing early reading difficulties and related factors; and 3) **Conclusion Drawing**, which summarized insights on teachers' strategies for overcoming initial reading challenges.

## Result and Discussion

Teachers play a key role in the reading-learning process, serving as facilitators, learning resources, motivators, and organizers (Setyastuti et al., 2021). Success in initial reading significantly impacts students' reading skills in subsequent stages (Hadiana et al., 2018). Not all first-grade students possess adequate reading skills at the start of the school year. As much as 85% of early-grade elementary students have been identified with reading difficulties and language proficiency issues (Fauzi in Hasanah & Lena, 2021). Findings on teachers' strategies for addressing early reading difficulties at SD N 3 Kudi reveal the following:

- a. **Basic Reading Skills Deficiencies:** First-grade students largely struggle with distinguishing vowels from consonants. One student could not accurately identify the alphabet, and two students had difficulty distinguishing similar letters, such as "m" and "w," "f" and "v," and so on. Additionally, one student struggled with reading syllables, and two students were not fluent in reading words.
- b. **Overall Low Reading Proficiency:** Students' basic reading skills remain limited, with many unable to recognize letters or read words fluently. The learning environment is primarily teacher-centered, with teachers heavily involved in explaining material, educating, and guiding students throughout the learning process. Teachers often need to dictate words or sentences to ensure effective comprehension and that students follow along smoothly.

- c. Reading instruction in first grade is delivered gradually through targeted strategies and approaches. These strategies include: a) planning the lessons; b) using varied instructional strategies, and c) conducting evaluations and follow-ups. The approaches applied consist of: a) providing motivation, b) giving feedback, and c) offering positive affirmations.
- d. Teachers face limitations in utilizing technology for instruction. Factors such as age and limited internet access within the SD N 3 Kudi environment hinder the integration of technology in first-grade reading lessons. As a result, traditional teaching methods remain predominant. However, with their skills, teachers are able to maximize the available resources and even create their own instructional materials.
- e. Parental involvement in supporting children's reading practice at home is still low. All parents of the students work, which limits the time they can spend assisting with their child's learning after work hours. Many parents express that their time for learning support is limited due to work demands and their own capabilities in teaching. Additionally, four parents report that their children are less open about learning difficulties and have limited communication with teachers about their progress.

### **Teacher Strategies to Overcome Initial Reading Difficulties**

Literacy skills and students' ability to understand material are interconnected. Through reading, students can grasp the subject matter presented by teachers (Khusnia et al., 2022). When students struggle to comprehend lessons, they often become disengaged and unmotivated. Students with weak reading abilities tend to have lower academic performance compared to those with stronger reading skills. During the learning process, both skills and knowledge need to be balanced (Corinna et al., 2020). Literacy skills and knowledge across other subjects are developed together to achieve the curriculum's learning goals. According to Siswanto & Wahida (2022), strong reading skills contribute to increased knowledge and experience, foster critical thinking, provide enjoyment, and cultivate students' interest in reading.

Teachers need effective strategies during instruction to achieve these goals (Khairina et al., 2023). Strategies to address early reading difficulties include teaching strategies and approaches. As Amir (2021) notes, for students to be engaged, teachers need the skills to select and apply suitable methods, strategies, and approaches for the material. The strategies implemented at SD N 3 Kudi to address first-grade reading difficulties include:

### **Teacher Strategies in Learning**

#### **a. Lesson Planning**

Lesson planning begins with understanding students' needs and identifying their early reading challenges. As facilitators, teachers need to be aware of students' needs to reflect knowledge, foster curiosity, and serve as role models (Brummelen in Seco & Cendana, 2022). Teachers conduct reading assessments to determine students' initial reading skills. This assessment includes alphabet recognition (A-Z) and reading simple words. Some students struggle with reading individual letters and find it difficult to read words. These assessment results help map students' needs, guide instructional strategies, and inform lesson planning. Planning serves as a foundational guide to ensure the learning process aligns with educational goals (Nursyahida & Nurhaliza, 2024). Planning for reading lessons involves preparing simple words in Indonesian for reading practice, selecting teaching strategies, and creating letter and syllable cards as instructional tools. Ergawati et al. (2023) emphasize that lesson planning includes setting goals, choosing strategies, defining learning content, and selecting media.

#### **b. Utilizing Varied Instructional Strategies**

The instructional strategy employed by teachers for reading is a combination approach. This strategy consists of several reading techniques tailored to the needs and conditions of students at that time. The reading strategies used by teachers include: (1) singing strategy, (2) letter and syllable card strategy, (3) dictation strategy, and (4) stick game strategy. The use of these varied strategies has been observed to encourage students to ask questions, show courage in answering, and have the willingness to attempt reading words presented by the teacher. The variety of instructional strategies used in the classroom fosters enthusiasm and active participation among students during the learning process. This aligns with the views of Maulia & Purnomo (2023), who state that diverse instructional strategies can enhance the motivation of elementary school students. Furthermore, varied instruction accommodates students' different interests in learning. The singing strategy is beneficial for auditory learners, the letter cards for visual learners, and the stick game for kinesthetic learners. Here are the strategies used by the first-grade teacher to address early reading difficulties:

**Singing Strategy:** At the beginning of their elementary education, students are introduced to letters through the use of alphabet songs or singing strategies. According to Hutabarat (2020), the singing strategy employs lyrics that are set to music. The use of alphabet songs is also implemented during Indonesian language lessons. The researcher found that some students exhibited boredom, sleepiness, and lack of enthusiasm during learning. However, when the teacher encourages singing, students immediately become enthusiastic and eager to follow the teacher's instructions. As noted by Anugerah et al. (2023), the singing strategy motivates students to engage in learning. In practice, the teacher writes

letters A through Z on the board and invites students to sing along while pointing to the letters being sung. This singing strategy enhances reading skills by enriching vocabulary, training memory, and providing joy and satisfaction (Hutabarat, 2020). The simple lyrics and the teacher's classroom management help students feel joyful while easily memorizing the letters.

**Letter and Syllable Card Strategy:** To assist students who struggle to recognize the alphabet, the teacher uses letter cards. These letter cards serve as tools to support early reading by enabling students to see and remember letter shapes through images on the cards (Pangastuti & Hanum, 2017). The teacher shows the letter cards and provides examples of the sounds each letter makes, prompting students to imitate the sounds. This activity is repeated using different letter cards to help students remember and pronounce letters accurately. Additionally, letter cards can also be used by students to practice constructing words as they desire (Susanti, 2018). Syllable cards are media for students who have difficulty combining or reading words. In their use, the teacher guides students to read the syllables on the cards step-by-step. The teacher starts by introducing simple syllable combinations such as ba-bi-bu-be-bo, ca-ci-cu-ce-co, and da-di-du-de-do. The teacher then asks students to read a simple syllable like “ba” and adds another syllable “ca.” Guided by the teacher, students read the combination of syllables together, “b-a= ba” and “c-a= ca.” These two syllables are then combined to form the word “baca” (to read). The use of syllable cards is repeated with various simple words. The teacher also employs syllable cards for familiarization with reading before class starts. Before entering the classroom, the teacher prepares several letter cards for students to read in turns. Students who are accustomed to this process can easily read more complex words and sentences.

**Dictation Strategy:** The dictation strategy is implemented after students are able to recognize and pronounce letters correctly. In practice, students are encouraged to listen attentively to the letters pronounced by the teacher. Simultaneously, they are asked to write down the letters they hear in their notebooks. Students designated by the teacher are asked to lead the spelling of syllables to form words, while other students listen and imitate, pointing to the written words in their notebooks. The dictation strategy helps improve students' listening, writing, and reading skills, as well as enhance their concentration (Saragih, 2022). This aligns with the views of Azkia & Ridhuan (2023), who assert that the dictation strategy requires students to focus and concentrate while listening and writing. Without proper concentration, students may miss what the teacher reads (Saragih, 2022). This is because, in applying this strategy, students are required to use their senses to hear, process, and generate written content based on what they hear. Consequently, dictation not only trains motor skills in writing but also strengthens students' abilities to quickly understand and process information. Through dictation, students can enhance their accuracy and precision in writing.

**Stick Game Strategy:** The stick game strategy is an innovation by the teacher to introduce capital letters to students. Capital letters are used to begin sentences, names, and so on (Lestari & Indihadi, 2019). While the lesson on using capital letters is typically taught in second grade, the teacher has introduced it in first grade. In practice, the teacher demonstrates how to form capital letters using sticks, such as A, B, C, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z. The teacher calls out a specific letter, and then each student attempts to form that capital letter with the sticks based on the teacher's pronunciation. This strategy employs simple materials, yet research shows that students are enthusiastic and eager to follow the teacher's instructions to construct capital letters with sticks. Learning about capital letters is a crucial lesson in elementary Indonesian language classes (Rochman & Kelana, 2022). Understanding capital letters benefits students in constructing sentences that adhere to proper writing conventions. Knowledge of capital letter usage helps students distinguish important words and enhances clarity in writing.

### c. Evaluation and Follow-Up

The evaluation conducted by the teacher includes aspects of students' reading development and notes on any challenges encountered during the learning process. The evaluation of early reading skills in Grade 1 occurs at the end of the lesson, where students take turns reading letters and words from the board. Students who can read letters and words well will proceed to the next stage of learning to read. However, those who still struggle with early reading will receive additional support from the teacher. The teacher provides guidance and assigns extra tasks related to reading activities, one of which involves reading assignments with parents in the form of videos. Additionally, the teacher's evaluation of the learning process is used to identify factors that may hinder or support learning. Research has found several aspects that can influence the success of learning to read in the classroom, including interest, cognitive level, psychological factors, health, communication, and the availability of facilities. The notes made by the teacher during the learning process serve as a basis for improvements in future lessons. According to Magdalena et al. (2023), evaluation in learning activities plays a crucial role in making informed decisions and is an essential competency that teachers must possess. Evaluation enables teachers to understand how far learning objectives have been achieved. Furthermore, with effective evaluation skills, teachers can identify the individual needs of students, allowing them to quickly address reading difficulties.

In follow-up sessions, the teacher groups students with varying reading abilities to encourage interaction and promote peer tutoring. Evaluations are conducted to determine actions that will enhance the quality and process of learning (Panjaitan & Naibaho, 2023). Follow-up activities based on evaluations help teachers identify strategies to meet students' learning needs. These follow-up activities also assist teachers in identifying areas that require improvement and in designing better activities to enhance students' abilities.

## Teacher Strategies for Approaching Learning

The learning process cannot be maximized without the approaches taken by the teacher. First-grade students exhibit diverse characteristics and interests. Research indicates that some students tend to be overly active, which disrupts the learning process, while others may feel bored, sleepy, or unmotivated due to a lack of interest in reading. This highlights the importance of employing effective teaching strategies and approaches in the learning process. According to Safitri et al. (2022), in the Indonesian language subject, teachers require strategies and approaches tailored to the needs and characteristics of their students. To create a conducive learning environment, teachers need to approach and understand the conditions and situations that arise from students during learning (Tanjung & Namora, 2022). Additionally, Safitri et al. (2022) argue that achieving an effective and efficient learning approach necessitates interaction between students and teachers to collectively reach objectives. Research shows that in the process of learning to read, teachers have employed various approaches to create a positive learning environment. The approaches taken by first-grade teachers at SD N 3 Kudi include individual approaches, group approaches, and emotional approaches.

- a. **Individual Approach:** The individual approach employed by the teacher in Grade 1 to address early reading difficulties involves supporting students during reading sessions and providing reading training on aspects that students find challenging. The teacher also guides students experiencing reading difficulties by helping them point to letters or words and assisting them in reading words, which students then repeat. An individual approach is essential for teachers in implementing learning strategies (Amir, 2021). By taking an individual approach, teachers can better understand the specific needs of students in reading and monitor their progress in greater detail. Students who receive attention and support from the teacher in the learning process become more confident in improving their early reading skills.
- b. **Group Approach:** The group approach in reading instruction aims to help students support each other in enhancing their reading skills. In practice, the teacher divides students into small groups consisting of those with good reading abilities and those who are still struggling with early reading. The teacher then asks students to read short words or sentences. Students who are proficient in reading go first, followed by the others. Additionally, the teacher encourages students to read in a relay fashion. According to Amir (2021), biological, intellectual, and psychological differences can serve as the basis for group approaches. This allows the teacher to create a learning environment that complements and fosters collaborative learning. Most students can grasp lessons better when taught by peers, as the language used is often easier to understand (Nurhasanah & Gumiandari, 2021). Thus, through the group approach, students not only gain an understanding of the material but also enhance their communication and socialization skills.
- c. **Emotional Approach :** Creating a sense of comfort for students significantly impacts their success in the learning process. The emotional approach taken by the teacher includes providing motivation and offering feedback to students. As Amir (2021) points out, emotions are closely tied to feelings. Therefore, when addressing early reading difficulties, it is essential to provide motivation, feedback, and positive affirmations in learning. To spark students' interest in reading, the teacher emphasizes the importance of learning to read. The teacher helps students understand that if they cannot read, they will struggle in the learning process. Motivation in learning can encourage and guide students to explore new things (Windrawati et al., 2020). By highlighting the significance of reading skills, the teacher helps students realize that reading is not just a task but a valuable skill for accessing a broader range of knowledge.

First-grade students exhibit a high level of curiosity, often asking questions and making statements during the learning process. The feedback provided by the teacher consists of answers, explanations, and positive affirmations. Feedback is also given by the teacher after the reading activity concludes. Students who finish reading receive feedback in the form of corrections to their reading or positive reinforcement for their efforts. Providing appropriate feedback positively influences students' motivation to learn and can enhance academic achievement (Mardhiyah et al., 2024). Through constructive feedback, students can understand their mistakes and receive guidance for improvement in future lessons.

Essentially, first-grade students require more guidance and attention from their teachers. This is due to younger students often being active, highly curious, and playful (Resti et al., 2023). Implementing learning strategies tailored to students' needs and characteristics will help address learning difficulties. Furthermore, by adopting a learning approach, students feel comfortable in the classroom, allowing them to be open and fully engaged in the learning process. Through interactive and collaborative approaches, teachers can better recognize the needs of each student.

## Factors Influencing Teacher Strategy Implementation

Several factors can influence the implementation of strategies to address early reading difficulties in first-grade students. These factors stem from the students themselves, the teachers, the parents, and the students' learning environment.

Research indicates that there are both hindering and supporting factors in the strategies that teachers employ to tackle early reading challenges in first grade, as outlined below:

#### *Hindering Factors*

- a. **Student Interest:** Teachers cannot impose their students' interest in learning, but they can offer support and guidance. Some students struggle with early reading but are reluctant to engage in reading activities because they prefer mathematics. This disinterest can lead to boredom, laziness, and a lack of motivation during the learning process. To address the diverse interests of students, teachers first identify their interests and learning styles, mapping out their preferences. If some students still show low interest in reading, teachers attempt to motivate them by emphasizing the importance of reading as a skill. As Rahman (2021) points out, interest serves as motivation for learning. Therefore, high interest can encourage students to invest more effort into developing their early reading skills. To enhance students' interest, teachers often incorporate enjoyable strategies in their lessons, such as singing, playing games, reading together, or even learning outdoors. With the right support and a learning environment that meets students' needs, their interest in reading can increase.
- b. **Cognitive:** Research shows that the level of reading proficiency varies among students; not all students progress at the same rate. Some can read well, while others struggle significantly. Some students find it easy to read words, while others require more time. According to Coltheart (2015), cognitive aspects play a crucial role in determining learning ability. Developmental theory suggests that the reading process involves brain functions, including attention, memory, and information processing. As a result, each student has different reading abilities and progress. A solution for teachers is to adapt their teaching strategies to fit each student's development while providing support and in-depth guidance. Additionally, teachers must devote extra time and attention to students who still face reading challenges, all while meeting the demands of the curriculum.
- c. **Psychological:** Psychological aspects relate to students' emotional and mental states, which can significantly affect the learning process. In the classroom, some students display feelings of embarrassment and lack of confidence when asked to read. This can lead to avoidance behavior, causing disruptions in the learning process. Research by Sudarsana (2019) indicates that psychological issues can hinder academic performance. Students under psychological pressure often feel overwhelmed and unfocused. Feelings of shame or fear of ridicule from peers for not being able to read well can exacerbate the situation. Teachers can address this by consistently offering motivation and positive encouragement, as well as acknowledging the progress made by students.
- d. **Environment:** The learning environment significantly influences students' ability to read at an early stage. This environment includes both the classroom setting and the home environment. During classroom learning, researchers observed that while teachers made efforts to manage the class effectively, some students still appeared bored and distracted, often playing by themselves. These conditions can obstruct the implementation of the teacher's strategies. First-grade students still require substantial guidance and support while learning, presenting a challenge for teachers in creating a supportive environment to overcome reading difficulties alongside effective classroom management.

Concepts taught in school need to be revisited and practiced at home to ensure that knowledge is well absorbed by students. Research indicates that busy schedules and a lack of awareness regarding the importance of studying lead some parents to completely delegate learning responsibilities to the school. Some parents assign their children to study independently, while others try to set aside time for learning after work. Astuti et al. (2024) argue that parental involvement is crucial in fostering literacy habits in children and taking responsibility for their actions. Effective communication between teachers and parents is necessary to share information regarding student progress and challenges. Insufficient communication can impact reading ability at school.

- e. **Health :** Health issues can impact students' learning activities. Physical and mental health problems can affect students' concentration and learning abilities. Research shows that students with vision or hearing impairments may face significant learning difficulties. Those with vision issues struggle to see letters, words, or writing on the board, while students with hearing impairments may have difficulty understanding the teacher's explanations. Additionally, students who are physically unwell cannot fully engage in learning activities. This poses a barrier to their progress in early reading. As Lestari et al. (2021) point out, physical health is a vital physiological factor to consider; furthermore, students who experience fatigue can adversely affect the reading-learning process. Teachers can address this by seating affected students at the front of the class, using larger media or writing, and communicating with parents about health issues that may interfere with the learning process.

#### *Supporting Factors*

- a. **Teacher Competence:** The competencies that teachers possess significantly influence the success of learning in the classroom. Research shows that teachers have a good understanding and skill set for managing their classrooms effectively. In first-grade classrooms, teacher competence is essential as they guide students at the initial stages of reading development. A teacher with solid competencies can more effectively enlighten students and help shape

their personalities (Setyastuti et al., 2021). Teachers who are skilled and knowledgeable can assist students struggling with beginning reading and boost their motivation to read. A broad understanding of teaching methods allows teachers to make informed decisions and take appropriate actions.

- b. Effective Communication:** Effective communication is vital between teachers, students, and parents. Research indicates that good communication fosters a comfortable and open environment where students feel safe to express their reading difficulties during learning. When students openly discuss their challenges, it enables teachers to tailor their approaches to meet individual needs. Clear communication helps students better understand the material (Maulia & Purnomo, 2023). Furthermore, findings reveal that some parents regularly communicate with teachers, which often results in their children demonstrating stronger reading abilities. According to Maulia & Purnomo (2023), effective communication from teachers plays a crucial role in enhancing elementary school students' motivation to learn. Teachers who convey material clearly can reduce student confusion and frustration during the learning process. Collaboration between teachers and parents is vital, as the family environment is the closest context for students.
- c. Facilities and Resources:** Facilities and resources are essential supporting factors in addressing reading difficulties. In Grade 1 at SD N 3 Kudi, various reading materials are available, including alphabet and noun posters, letter cards, syllable cards, and reading books. Although the school has limited access to technology due to internet constraints, teachers maximize the existing resources. Many teaching aids in the classroom are handmade. However, to better equip students and meet global challenges, teachers need to develop their technological skills and incorporate technology into learning.

These supporting and hindering factors must be carefully considered by teachers. By leveraging supporting factors, teachers can enhance the chances of success in implementing strategies to address beginning reading difficulties. Conversely, teachers must also be vigilant about overcoming any obstacles that hinder these strategies. By thoroughly addressing both aspects, teachers can prepare and make necessary adjustments to ensure that each student receives appropriate guidance to overcome their reading challenges.

## Conclusion

Teacher strategies represent efforts made by educators to plan activities aimed at implementing instruction, educating, and guiding students toward specific goals. These strategies are crucial for creating effective learning experiences in the classroom. The reading difficulties encountered in the first year at SD N 3 Kudi are quite complex, requiring teachers to determine appropriate steps to address these issues effectively. Reading instruction occurs in stages. Based on the research findings, it can be concluded that the strategies employed by teachers at SD N 3 Kudi are reasonably effective. These strategies encompass teaching methods and approaches. The teaching strategies include planning processes, learning strategy determination, evaluation, and follow-up stages. In contrast, the approaches include individual, group, and emotional methods. These strategies significantly assist teachers in overcoming beginning reading difficulties in the classroom. However, the application of teacher strategies does not always proceed as planned, leading to several factors that teachers must consider.

There are hindering factors affecting the implementation of teacher strategies for addressing reading difficulties, including interest, cognitive and psychological aspects, health issues, and environmental factors. Additionally, supporting factors such as teacher competence, communication, and available resources play a significant role. When optimized, these factors can lead to effective and efficient learning. Nonetheless, teachers need to address the hindering factors during strategy implementation to anticipate potential impacts and ensure learning objectives are achieved. Utilizing technology in instruction and encouraging parental involvement in the learning process can significantly enhance student development. Collaborating with parents is crucial, as their support and involvement will strengthen foundational skills, including beginning reading abilities.

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