



## **Teacher's Strategies for Overcoming Reading and Writing Delays in Lower-Grade Students at SDN 1 Mejobo**

**Rizki Tsaniazulfa<sup>1✉</sup>, Sekar Dwi Ardianti<sup>2</sup> & Mohammad Syafruddin Kuryanto<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1✉</sup>Universitas Muria Kudus, tsaniazulfa2001@gmail.com, Orcid ID: [0000-0002-5522-3645](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5522-3645)

<sup>2</sup>Universitas Muria Kudus, sekar.dwi.ardianti@umk.ac.id, Orcid ID: [0000-0002-3944-4755](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3944-4755)

<sup>3</sup>Universitas Muria Kudus, syafruddin.kuryanto@umk.ac.id, Orcid ID: [0000-0002-7011-3508](https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7011-3508)

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### **Abstract**

This study aimed to describe the teacher's strategy for overcoming students' reading and writing delays and elucidate the factors influencing lower-grade students' reading and writing delays at SD Negeri 1 Mejobo. This qualitative research was carried out at SDN 1 Mejobo, Mejobo Sub-district, Kudus Regency, taking the subject of teachers and second-grade students. Data collection techniques were performed through interviews, observation, and documentation. The results uncovered that the strategy or learning pattern applied by the teacher in overcoming lower-grade students' reading and writing delays covered seven stages: 1) identifying students' reading and writing difficulties, 2) ascertaining students who had reading and writing difficulties, 3) consulting learning problems and discussing appropriate strategies to overcome reading delays with fellow teachers, 4) guiding reading together and instructing students to copy readings, 5) inviting students to listen and pay attention to friends who were reading and teaching students to write cursive, 6) dictating texts to students so that they learned to compose sentences and teaching students to make simple essays, and 7) giving assessment and evaluation of students' reading and writing abilities. The effectiveness of the seven stages has been analyzed and could be used as a recommendation for homeroom teachers who want to overcome delays in reading and writing in lower grades. Therefore, it can be concluded that in overcoming reading and writing delays, homeroom teachers have seven strategies that can be utilized as references.

### **Keywords:**

Teacher's Strategy, Reading Difficulties, Writing Difficulties

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**Abstrak**

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan strategi guru dalam mengatasi keterlambatan membaca dan menulis siswa serta menjelaskan faktor-faktor yang mempengaruhi keterlambatan membaca dan menulis siswa kelas bawah di SD Negeri 1 Mejobo. Penelitian kualitatif ini dilakukan di SDN 1 Mejobo Kecamatan Mejobo Kabupaten Kudus dengan mengambil subjek guru dan siswa kelas dua. Teknik pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan dokumentasi. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa strategi atau pola pembelajaran yang diterapkan guru dalam mengatasi keterlambatan membaca dan menulis siswa kelas bawah meliputi tujuh tahap: 1) mengidentifikasi kesulitan membaca dan menulis siswa, 2) memastikan siswa yang benar-benar mengalami kesulitan membaca dan menulis, 3) mengkonsultasikan masalah pembelajaran dan mendiskusikan strategi yang tepat untuk mengatasi keterlambatan membaca dengan sesama guru, 4) membimbing membaca bersama dan menyuruh siswa menyalin bacaan, 5) mengajak siswa mendengarkan dan memperhatikan teman yang sedang membaca dan mengajari siswa menulis tegak bersambung, 6) mendiktekan teks kepada siswa agar belajar menyusun kalimat dan mengajari siswa membuat karangan sederhana, dan 7) memberikan penilaian dan evaluasi kemampuan membaca dan menulis siswa. Keefektifan ketujuh tahapan tersebut telah dianalisis dan dapat dijadikan sebagai rekomendasi bagi wali kelas yang ingin mengatasi keterlambatan membaca dan menulis di kelas bawah. Oleh karena itu, dapat disimpulkan bahwa dalam mengatasi keterlambatan membaca dan menulis, wali kelas memiliki tujuh strategi yang dapat dijadikan referensi.

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**Kata Kunci:**

Strategi Guru, Kesulitan Membaca, Kesulitan Menulis

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## INTRODUCTION

In Indonesian schools, various issues, such as education survival, efficacy, and normalization, result in low training quality. Another issue emerges, mainly because there is a lack of creative teachers in Indonesian education, and educational plans are only based on data provided by the government without considering and paying attention to the student's needs (Abdullah, 2016). All of these things prevent learning from running ideally.

One of the reasons that also dominates learning cannot run ideally is the low capacity of children to read and write (Abdurrahman, 2017). If lower-grade students cannot read and write, they will inevitably experience problems learning various areas of concentration in higher classes. For this reason, children must be constantly directed so that they have the desire to learn to read carefully. Reading delay, defined as dyslexia, are a child's inability to read and write (Lidwina, 2012). Dyslexia is a condition in which a person cannot perform exercises related to reading and writing. The effect of the disturbance is not due to an actual disability, i.e., visual impairment, but instead to how the brain processes impulses and learns to process data.

The difficulties that students have in reading and writing are generally brought on by a variety of factors. According to Shaywitz (in Saugadi, Malik & Burhan, 2021), students who experience reading and writing delays are caused by methodical relationships between letters and sounds, for example, difficulty recognizing the words "*Kuku*" and "*Kereta*" or misinterpreting words practically comparative as the equivalent, such as "*Lima Puluh*" with "*Lima Belas*." They all appear to have no hearing issues, but the issue is tied to how the cerebrum is handled. Children with dyslexia often experience confusion in determining sentence structure, primarily if they simultaneously use at least two dialects with different syntax.

A similar incident was experienced by lower-grade students at SDN 1 Mejobo. Based on the results of observations of the initial data of researchers at SDN 1 Mejobo in the second grade recommended by the principal for research conducted on December 11, 2021,

data on student delays in learning to read and write were obtained. It was stated by the second-grade teacher:

*"Masih ada beberapa siswa yang mengalami keterlambatan membaca menulis. Walaupun tidak mempunyai gangguan pada alat penglihatannya, beberapa anak mengalami kesukaran belajar membaca maupun menulis. Hal semacam itu lumrah terjadi karena belum berkembangnya kemampuan mereka dalam membedakan huruf abjad A-Z yang hampir mirip. Serta, beberapa siswa masih sukar membedakan huruf yang bunyinya sama seperti huruf (f) dan (v). Ada pula siswa yang mengalami kesulitan seperti siswa sering lupa cara membuat huruf karena siswa tidak bisa mengenali huruf yang bentuknya mirip, dan masih banyak siswa yang belum mengenali huruf abjad dengan benar sehingga merangkai kalimat sangat sulit dilakukan. Sebenarnya, penyebab keterlambatan siswa dalam membaca dan menulis tak hanya datang dari faktor psikologisnya saja; tentu saja, lingkungan mempengaruhi hal tersebut. Seperti yang kita tahu, anak-anak dua tahun kemarin belajar di rumah sehingga faktor lingkungan keluarga sangat mempengaruhi kemampuan anak dalam membaca dan menulis."*

[*"Some students still have reading and writing delays. Even though they do not have visual impairments, some children have difficulty learning to read and write. It happens because they have not developed their ability to distinguish the letters of the alphabet, A-Z, which are almost similar. Also, some students still have difficulty distinguishing letters that sound identical to letters (f) and (v). Some others also have difficulty, i.e., students often forget how to make letters since they cannot recognize letters that are similar in shape, and many students still do not recognize the alphabet letters correctly, so compiling sentences is very difficult. Actually, the cause of students' reading and writing delays does not only come from psychological factors; of course, the environment affects it. As known, during the past two years, children studied at home, so the family environment factor greatly affects children's ability to read and write."*]

Students learning difficulties in reading and writing can lead students to be unable to obey the educator's guidelines or orders. For

example, the teacher asks students to read the text in the student worksheet, but students with reading and writing problems feel confused when reading the text carefully or answering questions. Students with these difficulties mostly do not get good grades, and teachers sometimes do not pass them to the next grade. Therefore, teacher strategies must be applied to overcome learning difficulties experienced by students, such as reading and writing delays.

The availability of a teaching strategy will impact whether the learning process proceeds successfully and in accordance with the desired learning outcomes. According to Eggen & Kauchak (2015), the teacher's strategy is a set of exercises to complete everything per the school implementation in the long term. The presence of this teacher strategy will work with the learning objectives to be achieved during classroom learning exercises. To address the issue of reading and writing delays in lower-grade students, this educational methodology should be utilized. Based on research conducted by Faudah (2019), it was revealed that the homeroom teacher's strategy determined student progress in overcoming reading and writing delays by applying essential comprehension strategies and the alphabet system. Meanwhile, to overcome writing difficulties, the homeroom teacher applied the procedures for following letters, arranging block letters, and writing in order. In addition, the presence of a learning office through reading and writing manuals could help limit students who experience reading and writing delays.

Then, further deepening was directed by Subakti et al. (2021) that the need to adjust the educator system limits in managing the reading and writing difficulties of lower-grade students. As in managing writing challenges, teachers apply spelling techniques, especially learning to read starting from a letter by letter, in which students familiarize themselves with the beginning of the letter from a collection of letters and to the end. In addition, to deal with reading difficulties, the teacher applies global strategies, particularly finding out how to read sentences as a whole, where students are approached to translate sentences into words, and from these words, students are approached to translate syllables.

The use of strategies by homeroom teachers has affected overcoming reading and writing difficulties for students who are lacking in SDN 1 Mejobo, Kudus Regency. Hence, this study aims to know the teacher's strategy for overcoming lower-grade students' reading and writing delays.

## **METHODS**

The method employed in this research was a qualitative approach, with descriptive data analysis in the form of writing obtained from the research subjects.

Sources of information in this study were obtained from primary information and secondary data. The data source in this study utilized the purposive sampling technique, i.e., the researcher's chosen technique in obtaining the data source. Through these techniques, it is expected that various relevant information could be extracted and focused on in this research. As Sugiyono (2017) revealed, the purposive sampling technique is a data collection technique with specific considerations. The selected informants were deemed to know the information and problems in depth and could be trusted as reliable data sources. The data sources in this study were second-grade students and a homeroom teacher at SDN 1 Mejobo, Mejobo Sub-district, Kudus Regency.

This study also used data collection methods of observation, interviews, documentation, and data validity (Sugiyono 2017). Obtaining information in this study indicated concluding, choosing the main points, and focusing on the essential things related to the strategies used by homeroom teachers in overcoming reading and writing delays for second-grade students at SDN 1 Mejobo.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

One of the objectives of implementing the learning strategy carried out by Mrs. SM as a second-grade homeroom teacher at SDN 1 Mejobo was to overcome students' reading and writing delays. The teacher's strategy itself is an effort made by a teacher in learning to generate students' interest, enthusiasm, and attention to achieve the goal. A teacher is also responsible for guiding, educating, directing,

teaching, and training his students to be better than before (Nasution, 2017). Then, reading delays mean symptoms of difficulty in learning the components of words and sentences, commonly referred to as dyslexia (Abdurrahman, 2017). Meanwhile, writing delay is difficulty expressing thoughts or feelings and ideas in symbols (Indriani, 2021).

The following are the findings of data analysis of teacher strategies applied to second-grade students at SDN 1 Mejobo to overcome reading and writing delays, obtained from interviews and observations from May 23 to June 4, 2022.

#### 1. Identifying reading and writing difficulties

From the data analysis, the research findings revealed that the first step was identifying students' reading and writing difficulties to find out the forms of difficulties experienced by students and determine students with reading and writing delays. Partowisastro in Yuline (2018) described that identifying learning difficulties implies an effort to identify and determine students who are estimated to have learning difficulties because the learning difficulties experienced by students are different, so they should not be generalized.

This stage is also supported by the observation results of the learning course in second grade, as depicted in the following documentation.



**Figure 1.** Process of Identifying Students' Delays

In Figure 1, before the teacher implemented strategies for overcoming reading delays, Mrs. SM first found out which students had reading delays by giving orders to students to take turns reading. Furthermore, from these activities, it could be seen that

students still experienced reading delays. Of the three student subjects, NA, QN, and WF, it can be seen that the three of them are still reading spelling, especially difficult words. They still cannot recognize letters well and cannot understand the meaning of sentences that have been read.

According to Pahlevi (2017), his research results explained that a teacher must first understand students' reading and writing abilities before designing learning strategies used to overcome students' reading and writing delays. Thus, it can be concluded that the strategy applied by Mrs. SM is a step that needs to be done and can be recommended to measure and find out the condition of students who experience reading and writing delays.

#### 2. Ensuring students who had difficulty reading and writing

Data analysis of research findings uncovered that Mrs. SM re-assured the students who had been identified as having learning difficulties and categorized them based on the indicators of reading and writing difficulties formulated. The purpose of this stage was for teachers to know more precisely the factors causing students to experience reading and writing delays. Windrawati, Solehun & Gafur (2020) also stated that it is necessary to identify and determine the specifications and qualifications of the results that must be achieved and become the targets of the attempt by considering the crucial problems to be resolved.

The process of ensuring that students who experienced difficulties were also reinforced by the results of observations of the course of learning in second grade, as displayed in the following documentation.



**Figure 2.** The Process of Determining Students Who Need Guidance

In Figure 2, it could be observed that Mrs. SM ensured which students identified as having reading delays to formulate appropriate strategies to use and apply to students. Furthermore, from these activities, students who experienced reading delays could be seen based on the indicators formulated. They included 1) reading in reverse what is read, such as *duku* is read as *kudu*, d is read as b, or p is read as q; 2) moving the head, not the eyes that moved while reading; 3) placing books too close to the eyes when reading; 4) reading word for word; 5) reading too fast; 6) read without expression.

Of the three student subjects, NA, QN, and WF, it could be seen that one of the three student subjects can already distinguish words that are almost similar in letters, while the other two cannot yet distinguish words that are almost similar in letters. The three student subjects read slowly since they were still spelling. In addition, one of the three student subjects already knows most functions of punctuation in reading, while the rest do not know the function of punctuation in reading.

Based on the findings of the data above, it could be known that some students needed more guidance regarding reading and writing delays. Like errors in writing capital letters, punctuation errors occur due to a lack of accuracy and focus because the teacher cannot create a conducive teaching atmosphere (Qutrinnida, Roysa & Kuryanto, 2022). According to Makmun (2002), to understand the characteristics and factors causing learning difficulties carefully, teachers must diagnose learning difficulties based on indicators of reading and writing delays formulated. Thus, it can be concluded that the stages of the learning strategy carried out by Mrs. SM are the right stage and can be recommended to find out the factors that cause and behind students to experience reading and writing delays.

### 3. Consulting learning problems and discussing appropriate strategies to overcome reading and writing delays with fellow teachers

From the data analysis, the research findings showed that Mrs. SM told his findings in the learning process in the form of reading and writing delays experienced by students against fellow teachers. Not only that, but this

stage also had the planning used by Mrs. SM in determining and preparing appropriate strategies to overcome students' reading and writing delays. Related to that, Qasim & Maskiah (2016) explained that a teacher could determine what strategies are used to achieve learning objectives through maximum planning. Planning can prevent learning failure.

The results of the researchers' observations of Mrs. SM also supported this stage, as illustrated in the following documentation.



**Figure 3.** Discussion Activities with Fellow Teachers

In Figure 3, Mrs. SM consulted the problems of students' reading and writing delays and strategies to be used to overcome them. Windrawati et al. (2020) asserted that achieving the desired goals is necessary to plan in implementing learning strategies, i.e., the consideration and selection of a robust primary approach to achieve goals, consideration, and determination of the steps taken from beginning to end, and consideration and setting benchmarks and standard measures to be used to assess the success of the strategy carried out.

With the planning of learning strategies, the implementation of learning activities will be good and effective. Because of planning or preparation in designing the strategy, a teacher can provide good knowledge. Therefore, he can deal with situations in the classroom firmly, steadily, and flexibly (Qasim & Maskiah, 2016). Thus, it can be concluded that the stages of the learning strategy carried out by Mrs. SM are the right stage and can be recommended to find out the factors that cause and are the background of students experiencing reading and writing delays.

4. Guiding reading together and giving instructions to students to copy the readings

Data analysis of research findings demonstrated that Mrs. SM gave orders to students to take turns reading. It was hoped that all students would get to know the various existing vocabularies together. Djamarah & Zain (2018) also affirmed that the primary strategy that teachers could use in providing guidance services to children with difficulty learning to read is service strategies based on the category of cases and the nature of the problem. Under the nature of the problem, guidance services are provided to students as individuals and in group situations.

The process of joint reading guidance was also supported by the results of observations of the learning process in the second grade, as shown in the following documentation.



**Figure 4.** Guidance for Reading Together

In Figure 4, Mrs. SM implemented a strategy to overcome learning delays by providing joint tutoring. This strategy was chosen since many students experienced reading delays; that way, students would get to know the various existing vocabularies. In this regard, Djamarah & Zain (2018) stated that the basic strategy that teachers can do in providing guidance services to children with difficulty learning to read is to provide service strategies based on the category of cases and the nature of the problem accordingly; with the nature of the problem, guidance services are provided to students as individuals and in group situations. Group guidance services can be provided when several individuals have similar needs or problems.

Then, Mrs. SM's initial strategy to overcome writing delays was also to give

students orders to copy the readings. The observations of the learning course in second grade supported the process of these activities, as in the following documentation.



**Figure 5.** The Activity of Copying Text

Figure 5 depicts that Mrs. SM orders students to copy the subject matter on the blackboard. This activity was the first step of Mrs. SM's strategy to overcome writing delays so that students recognized letters or word order. This kind of thing has been commonly done in the learning process. However, this strategy is said to overcome writing delays in lower grades effectively. Mustikowati, Wijayanti & Darmanto (2016) have also emphasized that writing activities in lower grades are usually implemented by copying or imitating writing from handbooks or other textbooks, imitating the teacher's writing on the blackboard, or writing from dictation given by the teacher.

5. Teaching students to listen to friends who were reading and teaching students to write cursive



**Figure 6.** Student's Listening Activities in Reading

From the data analysis, the research findings indicated that Mrs. SM gave orders to students with reading delays to come forward to read to the front of the class. Then, she corrected word accuracy, sentence structure, and expression while reading. The process of these activities was reinforced by the observations of the learning course in the second grade, as in the documentation above.

Figure 6 portrays that Mrs. SM implemented a strategy to overcome reading delays by providing mutual guidance regarding excellent and correct reading. Moreover, students were also seen listening carefully and following instructions from Mrs. SM. It was carried out so that all students heard and knew how to read properly and correctly. Salmia (2020) mentioned teacher strategies for overcoming reading delays, and one of them is the Gillingham method, which introduces combined letter sounds into larger groups. It indicates that the strategy carried out by Mrs. SM can be a recommendation for overcoming writing delays. This statement is corroborated by Faudah's (2019) research results, explaining that the step to overcoming reading delays is asking students to come forward so that they can be independently introduced to the correct way of reading.

The following strategy that Mrs. SM did to overcome writing delays was to teach students to write cursive. At this stage, Mrs. SM taught how to write cursive so that students could write neatly while introducing vocabulary in one word. The observation of the learning process in the second grade supported the process of these activities, as depicted in the documentation below.



**Figure 7.** Cursive Writing Activities

In Figure 7, Mrs. SM provided an example for students to write cursive so that they were trained to be neat in their writing form. According to Djauzak (2014), one of the teacher's strategies for overcoming students' writing difficulties in the lower grades of elementary school is to use the spelling method, which includes steps to write open letters and string them into words.

Mrs. Strategy SM was also reinforced by another opinion from Natalita, Situngkir & Rabbani (2019), stating that the first benefit of cursive writing is that it helps students understand what is written. From her study, writing in a continuous cursive manner could also make students better understand what was written compared to writing an upright letter model.

6. Dictating texts to students to learn to compose sentences and teaching students to make simple essays

Data analysis of research findings revealed that Mrs. SM dictated texts to students to learn to compose sentences so that students with the slowest reading delay could recognize the syllables of each word. Related to that, Putri (2014) formulated a teacher strategy for overcoming reading difficulties for lower-grade students in elementary schools using the Fernald method. In this method, reading teaching is developed, which begins with writing words, and then the child sees the writing and reads it repeatedly so that the child can write and read correctly. The strategy has the same stages as the strategy formulated by Mrs. BC. Children who can listen and re-read the words learned will increase their awareness of the letter's shape and sound to overcome their reading delays (Ratnasari & Ehan, 2017). This statement is also confirmed by the observations of the learning course in second grade, as in the following documentation.





**Figure 8.** The Teacher Dictates Texts to Students

Figure 8 depicts that Mrs. SM implemented a strategy to overcome reading delays by providing mutual guidance related to the good and correct reading. Furthermore, students were also seen listening carefully and following instructions from Mrs. SM. That way, students could recognize and string words into coherent sentences.

Then, the following strategy that Mrs. SM did to overcome writing delays was to teach students to write simple essays to train their abilities in arranging words into sentences. The results of observations of the learning process in the second grade verified the process of these activities, as in the documentation below.



**Figure 9.** Essay Writing Activities by Students

In Figure 9, it can be seen that Mrs. SM checked and gave directions to each student regarding making simple essays. It was performed to train students' ability to compose words into sentences. In his research results, Pahlevi (2017) asserted that apart from training the ability to compose words, simple writing could train students' ability to compose word-for-word into sentences that others can understand. Based on a study conducted by Ardianti, Wanabuliandari, & Kanzunudin

(2019), learning presented in an engaging and fun way by connecting student learning materials with concepts in the surrounding environment can facilitate students in learning.

#### 7. Providing an assessment and evaluation of students' reading and writing skills

Data analysis of research findings exposed that Mrs. SM provided an assessment of a series of strategies that she had implemented. This assessment was intended to determine the changes in students with reading and writing delays. Dahnianti (2017) explained that measuring students' reading ability is one step in overcoming reading delays. With assessment, students can discover their abilities and improve their reading and writing skills.

The process of these activities is supported by the results of observations of the course of learning in second grade, as shown in the following documentation.



**Figure 10.** The Teacher Assesses Students in Reading

In Figure 10, Mrs. SM assessed students reading in front of the class. This activity measured whether there was a change in students related to reading delays. This statement is corroborated by Magdalena, Haq & Ramdhan (2020) that in providing an assessment at the end of the stage, the strategy used can provide information related to student progress until the development of further activities.

Not only assessing reading, but Mrs. SM also provided an assessment of students' writing skills, as in the documentation below.



**Figure 11.** The Teacher Assesses the Students' Writing Results

Figure 11 illustrates that Mrs. SM evaluated students' cursive writing results. Mrs. SM also provided a direct evaluation so that all students saw and learned together how to write cursive properly and correctly. Then, Mrs. SM assessed students' writing results while also providing notes if there were still wrong writings. With the strategy applied by Mrs. SM, providing related evaluations of students' reading and writing results could give an overview or list of students who needed further guidance. According to Faudah's (2019) research, it is explained that in overcoming reading and writing delays, it is necessary to evaluate so that a teacher determines follow-up strategies according to students' abilities.

## CONCLUSION

The conclusion from this study is that the strategies used by teachers in overcoming reading and writing delays in lower grades included 1) identifying students' reading and writing difficulties, 2) ascertaining students who had reading and writing difficulties, 3) consulting learning problems and discussing appropriate strategies to overcome reading delays with fellow teachers, 4) guiding on reading together and instructing students to copy readings, 5) inviting students to listen and pay attention to friends who were reading and teaching students to write cursive, 6) dictating texts to students so that they learned to compose sentences and teaching students to make simple essays, and 7) giving assessment and evaluation of students' reading and writing abilities.

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