

# Enhancing Primary Students' Engagement and Literacy: Addressing Challenges in Indonesian Language Learning through Contextual and Inclusive Strategies

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## Abstract

This study investigates the implementation of Bahasa Indonesia learning in Grade II at SDN Sawojajar 6 Malang, focusing on instructional practices, learning challenges, and applicable solutions. Using a qualitative descriptive method, data were collected through classroom observation, teacher interviews, and document analysis. Findings indicate that the teacher employed varied methods, including discussion, question-and-answer sessions, and educational games such as Card Match, supported by diverse learning resources and modified worksheets. Challenges included low reading interest, off-task behavior, lack of preparedness, excessive student activeness, drowsiness due to monotonous media, and the presence of a student with dyslexia. Solutions proposed include literacy exploration games, interactive activities, enforcing classroom agreements, integrating varied media, and providing targeted support for students with special needs through collaboration with parents, school staff, and government agencies. The results highlight the importance of contextual, engaging, and inclusive approaches in primary language learning.

## 1. Introduction

Language education in primary schools is widely recognized as the cornerstone of students' communication skills, cognitive development, and overall academic success (Arifin & Tasai, 2009). In the Indonesian context, Bahasa Indonesia holds a dual role—not only as the primary medium of instruction in formal education but also as the language of national unity. This dual function positions Bahasa Indonesia as an essential tool for fostering literacy competence, critical thinking skills, and cultural identity among students (Kemendikbud, 2022). Through systematic and well-structured instruction, students are expected to master reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills, which in turn become the foundation for lifelong learning and participation in a democratic society.

However, recent educational trends reveal an alarming decline in reading interest among Indonesian students, a phenomenon attributed to various socio-cultural and technological factors. The Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) results for Indonesia indicate that students' reading literacy remains below the OECD average, with weaknesses in both comprehension and critical evaluation of texts (OECD, 2019). One of the most cited contributing factors is the increasing exposure to digital entertainment and social media platforms, which often replace traditional reading habits. Platforms such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram offer instant gratification and highly visual stimuli, which can undermine sustained attention and deep processing required in reading activities (Walsh, 2010). This shift in media consumption has significant implications for students' comprehension skills, attention span, and classroom participation. Studies have shown that students with lower reading engagement tend to exhibit decreased vocabulary acquisition, reduced inferential comprehension, and less active involvement in classroom discourse (Kirsch et al., 2002). In the context of Bahasa Indonesia learning, such trends may hinder students from achieving national literacy benchmarks set by the government and compromise their ability to engage with broader knowledge domains that rely heavily on textual understanding (Kemendikbud, 2022).

The theoretical foundation of this study draws upon three complementary frameworks that collectively explain learning strategies, the identification of challenges, and the design of solutions. First, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory (1978) emphasizes the central role of social interaction in learning. According to Vygotsky, cognitive development is mediated through interactions with more knowledgeable others—teachers, peers, or parents—within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). This principle suggests that language learning, particularly at the primary school level, should be designed as an interactive process that promotes collaboration, discussion, and scaffolding. Previous studies have demonstrated that peer-assisted learning and dialogic teaching can significantly enhance literacy outcomes by enabling students to co-construct meaning and share interpretive strategies (Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Alexander, 2020). In the context of Indonesian language instruction, the implementation of structured group discussions, shared reading, and peer feedback is highly consistent with Vygotsky's model and can help mitigate disengagement resulting from passive media consumption.

Second, Tomlinson's (2001) model of differentiated instruction encourages the adaptation of content, process, and product according to students' readiness levels, learning profiles, and interests. This approach is highly relevant in heterogeneous classrooms where variations in literacy ability, attention span, and motivation are prevalent (Hall et al., 2003). Differentiated instruction provides multiple pathways to achieve learning goals, such as the use of visual media, kinesthetic activities, and texts with varying levels of complexity. In this study, differentiated strategies can be operationalized through the modification of reading materials for struggling readers, the integration of multimodal media for visual learners, and the design of interactive literacy games to sustain motivation. These strategies align with Indonesia's inclusive education policy, which promotes personalized approaches to accommodate students with special needs, including dyslexia (Directorate General of Teachers and Education Personnel, 2021).

Third, Piaget's (1964) theory of cognitive development, particularly the concrete operational stage (ages 7–11), underpins the use of play-based and interactive learning methods. At this stage, children begin to develop logical thinking skills but still require concrete and hands-on experiences to grasp abstract concepts. Therefore, integrating educational games such as *Card Match* into language learning can address students' need for active and tangible engagement while simultaneously facilitating vocabulary acquisition and text comprehension skills (Bodrova & Leong, 2007). Empirical studies have shown that game-based learning not only enhances students' motivation but also strengthens the retention of linguistic structures and meanings (Plass et al., 2015).

Grounded in these theoretical perspectives, this study carries dual significance. First, descriptively, it documents the practices of Indonesian language teaching in Grade II of primary schools in Indonesia, particularly within the framework of the *Merdeka Curriculum*, which emphasizes student-centered learning, the integration of local contexts, and competency achievement (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2022). Second, from a problem-solving standpoint, it identifies evidence-based strategies to address observed challenges, thereby offering insights that can be adapted by teachers and policymakers to enhance literacy engagement and inclusivity in classrooms. The importance of this focus extends beyond the individual classroom level. Nationally, literacy constitutes a strategic priority in Indonesia's Medium-Term National Development Plan (RPJMN), which targets the improvement of reading culture among children (Bappenas, 2020). Globally, this effort resonates with the Sustainable Development Goal 4 of UNESCO, which advocates for inclusive and equitable quality education (UNESCO, 2017).

In line with these frameworks, the study aims to describe the implementation of Indonesian language learning in Grade II, identify challenges encountered during the learning process, and propose theory-driven practical solutions to address them. Its anticipated contribution lies in providing adaptive strategies that can be integrated into daily teaching practices while reinforcing the relevance of sociocultural theory, differentiated instruction, and cognitive development in designing primary language education in a technology-driven era.

## 2. Method

This qualitative descriptive study was conducted at SDN Sawojajar 6 Malang in March 2025, involving one Grade II classroom teacher and 28 students as the main participants. The participants

were purposively selected—the Grade II class was chosen for its relevance to the research focus on early literacy and ongoing Bahasa Indonesia instructional practices—and permission was obtained from the principal and classroom teacher. Classroom observations were carried out during regular morning sessions, with data systematically recorded in structured field notes documenting the three stages of the lesson (opening, core, and closing activities), the instructional methods applied (discussion, question-and-answer, educational games), the learning media employed (workbooks, modified worksheets, card match activities, videos), and students’ responses and interactions (enthusiasm, attentiveness, off-task behavior). To ensure consistency, the research team used a structured observation sheet containing operational indicators—such as frequency of teacher questions, level of student participation, type of feedback, and instances of disruptive behavior—so that the field data could be condensed systematically into discrete observation units (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews with the classroom teacher were conducted to explore pedagogical strategies, the use of resources and learning media, assessment practices, and the teacher’s perceptions of challenges faced by the students. The interview guide was developed based on the research objectives and initial observation findings; core topics included the rationale for instructional choices, adaptation of worksheets, strategies for improving reading interest, and experience in addressing the needs of students with special educational needs (e.g., dyslexia). Interviews were audio-recorded (with the participant’s consent), transcribed verbatim, and verified through member checking, in which a summary of the findings was returned to the teacher for confirmation of meaning and factual accuracy (Creswell & Poth, 2018). In addition, relevant verbatim quotes were extracted to enrich thematic descriptions and maintain the connection between data and analysis.

Document analysis encompassed the review of teaching materials (e.g., the LKS Eksis workbook, teacher-modified worksheets), lesson plans or teaching guidelines, samples of student work, and class administrative records (attendance lists, group allocations). This analysis aimed to evaluate the alignment between instructional planning and actual classroom practices—such as the coherence of learning objectives and activities, the level of differentiation in worksheets, and evidence of the use of local contexts in instruction. These artefacts were treated as triangulation data to complement and deepen the findings from observations and interviews (Miles et al., 2014).

Data analysis followed the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2014), which includes: (1) data condensation, involving the selection and simplification of data through initial coding (first-cycle coding) based on categories of instructional strategies, student behaviors, and challenges observed; (2) data display, in the form of thematic matrices and frequency tables to identify patterns and relationships among categories; and (3) conclusion drawing/verification, where final themes were developed and validated for consistency. Initial codes and themes were generated through open and axial coding cycles (Saldaña, 2016) and were reviewed by other team members to enhance dependability. To ensure coding reliability, two independent researchers coded a subset of the data and held consensus meetings to resolve interpretative differences; coding discussion notes and reflective memos formed part of the audit trail for confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

The credibility of the study was reinforced through methodological triangulation (observation, interview, document analysis), member checking, internal peer debriefing within the research team, and the provision of thick description to enable readers to judge the transferability of the findings. Ethical considerations included obtaining written permission from the school, securing informed consent from the teacher and parents (for observing students), and anonymizing all personal data in the presentation of results (e.g., using pseudonyms for individuals). Methodological limitations—such as the focus on a single class in one school and the relatively short observation period—were acknowledged and positioned as the basis for recommending further studies employing longitudinal or comparative designs.

### **3. Results and Discussion**

### 3.1. Integrating Contextual and Interactive Strategies in Indonesian Language Learning

The observation of Indonesian language learning in Grade II revealed a thoughtfully varied approach to instruction, combining whole-class discussions, structured question-and-answer sessions, and an interactive game-based activity known as Card Match. This range of strategies reflects an intentional balance between teacher-led guidance and student-centered participation, enabling learners to engage cognitively, socially, and emotionally in the lesson. The teacher's selection of methods was not random but aligned with established pedagogical models that emphasize structured flexibility, as advocated by Joyce and Weil (2000), and with Vygotsky's (1978) principle of scaffolding through guided participation within the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD).

Whole-class discussion served as the foundational platform for knowledge construction in the observed lessons. In these discussions, the teacher posed open-ended questions related to the lesson theme, "Sayangi Lingkungan" ("Love the Environment"), encouraging students to share their prior knowledge and personal experiences. This form of dialogic teaching has been shown to foster higher-order thinking and deepen conceptual understanding by allowing students to articulate and negotiate meaning with peers and the teacher (Alexander, 2020; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). By anchoring the discussion in students' lived experiences—such as their daily interactions with their environment—the teacher implemented a form of contextualized learning that has been linked to stronger retention and application of knowledge (Johnson, 2002).

The structured question-and-answer (Q&A) sessions further operationalized the scaffolding process. Here, the teacher used targeted questioning to assess comprehension, clarify misconceptions, and prompt students to elaborate on their responses. The Q&A format was dynamic: sometimes individual students were addressed directly, while in other moments, the teacher invited multiple students to build upon one another's answers. This interactive questioning technique resonates with Black and Wiliam's (1998) notion of formative assessment, where ongoing feedback loops between teacher and students contribute to incremental learning gains. The observed practice of integrating Q&A after reading aloud from the workbook also aligns with research suggesting that immediate verbal engagement following reading activities enhances comprehension and vocabulary acquisition in young learners (Nation, 2013).

Perhaps the most distinctive feature of the instructional implementation was the use of the Card Match game, an activity designed and co-created by the teacher and students. In this game, students worked in small groups to match cards containing numerical identifiers with corresponding textual statements. The active, hands-on nature of this task leveraged principles from Piaget's (1964) theory of cognitive development, specifically the concrete operational stage, where learners benefit from tangible, manipulable learning aids to bridge abstract concepts. Furthermore, the game format tapped into the motivational affordances of play, as supported by Plass, Homer, and Kinzer (2015), who found that game-based learning can increase engagement and enhance cognitive processing through goal-oriented, interactive challenges.

The Card Match activity also embodied elements of collaborative learning. By working in groups, students had to communicate, negotiate, and reach consensus on which cards matched, thereby practicing both language skills and social competencies. This mirrors Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on the social nature of learning, where peer interaction becomes a medium for co-constructing understanding. The teacher's role during this activity shifted from direct instruction to facilitation—circulating around the room, providing prompts when groups were stuck, and praising successful matches. Such a shift reflects what Joyce and Weil (2000) describe as a flexible instructional model, where the teacher adapts their role in response to the evolving dynamics of the classroom.

In terms of learning resources, the teacher effectively blended formal and informal sources. Formal resources included the LKS Eksis Bahasa Indonesia workbook and ministry-provided textbooks, which offered structured content and exercises aligned with the national curriculum. Informal or contextual resources included the students' own experiences and the immediate school environment, which were used as entry points for lesson themes. The integration of multimedia elements, such as short videos and images relevant to the topic, further diversified the learning

modalities. These multimedia inclusions are consistent with Mayer's (2009) cognitive theory of multimedia learning, which posits that combining verbal and visual information can enhance understanding by engaging dual processing channels in the brain.

The teacher's strategy of linking multiple resource types aligns with Tomlinson's (2001) differentiated instruction framework, which emphasizes providing varied avenues for students to access and engage with content. This is particularly important in a heterogeneous classroom, where differences in prior knowledge, literacy skills, and learning preferences necessitate instructional flexibility. In the observed lessons, the differentiation was not only in content delivery but also in the level of support provided: some students received more individualized guidance during the Card Match activity, while others were encouraged to take leadership roles within their groups.

From a broader pedagogical perspective, the observed instructional implementation demonstrates an alignment between theory and practice. The combination of teacher-led discussions, scaffolded Q&A, and interactive group activities reflects an understanding of how young learners acquire language skills through a blend of explicit instruction and experiential engagement. This aligns with Bruner's (1960) spiral curriculum principle, where learners revisit concepts in increasingly complex ways, each time with greater depth and skill. In this case, the initial discussion provided conceptual framing, the Q&A deepened comprehension, and the Card Match game offered an applied, collaborative practice opportunity.

Moreover, the observed methods resonate with current curricular reforms in Indonesia, particularly the Kurikulum Merdeka, which promotes student-centered learning, active participation, and the use of local contexts in instruction (Kemendikbud, 2022). By using both national curriculum resources and locally relevant examples, the teacher exemplified how curricular goals can be achieved without sacrificing engagement or contextual relevance. The approach also addressed some of the known challenges in primary language instruction, such as maintaining student attention, promoting active participation, and fostering meaningful connections between in-class learning and students' everyday lives.

In sum, the instructional implementation observed in this study was characterized by an intentional blend of structured and flexible strategies, integration of diverse resources, and alignment with established educational theories. The use of whole-class discussions encouraged broad participation and activated prior knowledge, the Q&A sessions scaffolded comprehension and provided immediate feedback, and the Card Match game offered an interactive and collaborative platform for applied learning. Together, these strategies created a dynamic learning environment that not only addressed cognitive objectives but also supported social and emotional engagement, thereby laying a robust foundation for literacy development in young learners.

### **3.2. Persistent Barriers to Effective and Inclusive Indonesian Language Learning**

The observation of Bahasa Indonesia instruction in Grade II revealed six persistent challenges that have implications for both learning quality and classroom inclusivity. These challenges—low reading interest, off-task behaviors, lack of preparedness, disruptive overactivity, student drowsiness, and insufficient individual support for a learner with dyslexia—reflect not only classroom-level issues but also broader systemic concerns about literacy motivation and inclusive education. Consistent with national and international reports, such as the OECD (2019) findings from PISA, these issues underscore the urgent need for multi-level strategies that address engagement, behavior management, and differentiated instruction in Indonesian primary classrooms.

One of the most prominent challenges was low reading interest among a segment of the students. This was observed when some learners appeared reluctant to engage with reading tasks, displayed minimal enthusiasm during reading-aloud activities, or required repeated prompts to follow along in the text. This phenomenon is consistent with findings from Fitriyah et al. (2020), who report that the growing influence of digital entertainment platforms—such as YouTube and TikTok—has shifted children's leisure preferences toward highly visual and fast-paced content, diminishing their patience for sustained reading. From a cognitive development perspective, reduced engagement with reading materials limits the depth of semantic processing, vocabulary acquisition,

and inferential comprehension (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Without deliberate interventions to make reading intrinsically rewarding, students risk developing surface-level literacy skills that are insufficient for critical thinking and academic success.

The second challenge identified was off-task behavior, such as students engaging with unrelated objects—playing with slime was a notable example—during instruction. While occasional distraction is developmentally typical in younger learners, persistent off-task behavior can undermine lesson flow and distract peers (Godwin et al., 2016). This behavior often co-occurred with a lack of connection to the learning task, suggesting that lesson pacing, task relevance, and opportunities for active participation may be critical factors in maintaining attention (Emmer & Sabornie, 2015). From a classroom management standpoint, off-task behavior points to the need for preventive strategies that blend engaging content with structured behavioral expectations, as recommended in proactive classroom management models (Evertson & Weinstein, 2011).

A related but distinct challenge was student unpreparedness, specifically the absence of required learning materials such as textbooks or workbooks during lessons. This impeded participation in guided reading and workbook-based exercises, requiring the teacher to adjust instruction on the spot. Research indicates that habitual unpreparedness can lead to cumulative learning gaps, as students repeatedly miss opportunities for guided practice (Wentzel, 2010). While occasional forgetfulness may be unavoidable, consistent lack of preparedness often reflects underlying issues such as weak organizational skills or insufficient parental oversight. Addressing this challenge may require coordinated communication between teacher and home, as well as the incorporation of routines that foster student accountability for their materials (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001).

The fourth challenge, overactive participation that disrupted classroom order, was observed when students physically left their seats or spoke out of turn in ways that interfered with peers' contributions. Although high enthusiasm is generally desirable, excessive and poorly regulated participation can hinder equitable turn-taking and distract from the instructional focus. From a socio-emotional learning perspective, such behavior may reflect underdeveloped self-regulation skills (Denham et al., 2012). Teachers in these situations must balance encouraging active engagement with reinforcing classroom norms for respectful and orderly interaction. This is particularly relevant in group discussions, where equitable participation is essential for collaborative knowledge construction (Gillies, 2016).

Another recurring issue was student drowsiness during lessons, particularly when instructional media were limited to static workbooks and teacher-led explanations. Signs included yawning, resting heads on desks, and reduced verbal participation. This aligns with research indicating that monotonous instructional delivery can contribute to cognitive disengagement, especially in younger learners who benefit from frequent changes in activity and multi-sensory stimulation (Mayer, 2009). In addition to pedagogical factors, drowsiness can be influenced by out-of-school factors such as inadequate sleep, poor nutrition, or long commute times (Curcio et al., 2006). Regardless of the cause, drowsiness reduces working memory efficiency and overall learning outcomes, making it a critical factor for teachers to monitor and address.

The final challenge observed was the presence of a student with dyslexia who was receiving insufficient individualized support. This student's reading difficulties had been formally identified by both the school and the family, yet the teacher faced challenges in providing consistent, targeted assistance during whole-class instruction. Dyslexia, a neurodevelopmental disorder characterized by persistent difficulties in accurate and/or fluent word recognition and spelling, requires specialized instructional strategies such as explicit phonics instruction, multi-sensory learning approaches, and extended practice opportunities (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). In the observed setting, the teacher's competing demands in managing the whole class limited the time available for individualized scaffolding, potentially impacting the student's confidence and social integration. This situation underscores the need for additional support structures, such as teacher aides, peer tutoring programs, or resource room interventions, to ensure that learners with specific needs can fully participate and progress (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011).

Collectively, these six challenges illuminate the multifaceted nature of barriers to effective language instruction in primary schools. They span motivational factors (low reading interest), behavioral management issues (off-task behavior, overactive participation), logistical and organizational concerns (unpreparedness), pedagogical dynamics (student drowsiness due to monotonous media), and inclusivity gaps (insufficient support for dyslexia). The interdependence of these factors suggests that solutions must be holistic rather than piecemeal. For example, increasing the variety and interactivity of lesson activities could simultaneously address reading interest, reduce off-task behavior, and mitigate drowsiness. Similarly, strengthening classroom routines and parental communication might improve preparedness while also reinforcing behavioral norms.

These findings also mirror broader patterns in Indonesian education, where literacy motivation is a persistent concern and inclusive practices are still developing. As OECD (2019) notes, achieving equity in education requires both systemic policy reforms and school-level innovations. In the case of SDN Sawojajar 6, targeted interventions that align with the Kurikulum Merdeka principles—student-centered learning, differentiation, and community engagement—could address the identified challenges in ways that are sustainable and contextually relevant. The complexity of these challenges also points to the importance of professional development for teachers, particularly in areas of differentiated instruction, inclusive pedagogy, and active learning design.

### **3.3. Practical, Contextual, and Inclusive Interventions to Improve Literacy and Engagement**

The suite of solutions co-developed with student observers reflects a coherent strategy that links motivation, classroom management, differentiation, and inclusion. Grounded in Tomlinson's (2001) differentiated instruction framework and UNESCO's (2017) inclusive education principles, these interventions are intentionally complementary: some target the individual learner's motivation and skills, others address classroom systems and routines, while a final set focuses on formal supports for learners with special needs. Implemented together, they create multiple entry points for advancing reading achievement and socio-emotional participation in the Grade II classroom.

To stimulate reading motivation, literacy exploration games combined with modest rewards, small-group reading rotations, and interactive questioning are proposed. Research on reading engagement indicates that when students perceive reading activities as meaningful and goal-oriented, their intrinsic motivation and sustained engagement increase (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000). Game-based formats (e.g., scavenger hunts, card games that reward correct comprehension answers) leverage this principle by converting reading tasks into purposeful, social challenges; empirical work on educational games shows that such activities can improve both motivation and learning outcomes when they are well-designed and aligned to curricular objectives (Plass, Homer, & Kinzer, 2015). At the same time, the use of extrinsic rewards should be applied judiciously: Self-Determination Theory suggests that rewards are most effective when they support competence and autonomy rather than undermining intrinsic interest (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Therefore, combining small rewards with choices (e.g., students choose reading partners, topics, or formats) and opportunities for mastery (progressive difficulty) is likely to produce more durable reading engagement than rewards alone.

Enhancing student focus requires both pedagogical and behavioral strategies. Short active routines and ice-breaker activities—like the local “Tepuk Fokus”—can be effective micro-interventions to re-orient attention and prepare working memory for learning tasks. Evidence from classroom physical-activity research indicates that brief, structured movement breaks increase on-task behavior and attentional control among elementary students (Mahar et al., 2006). Complementing physical re-engagement, dialogic and participatory teaching (structured turn-taking, think-pair-share, guided peer discussion) fosters attention by making listening and responding an expected part of the task rather than a passive state (Mercer & Littleton, 2007). From a classroom management perspective, proactively designing lessons with frequent, predictable shifts in activity and well-scaffolded participation will reduce opportunities for off-task behavior (Evertson & Weinstein, 2011; Emmer & Sabornie, 2015).

To address unpreparedness (students arriving without books), the proposed measure reframes consequences into pedagogical leverage—requiring same-day, scaffolded short-story writing as an

immediate literacy task for those who forgot their materials. Rather than punitive exclusion, this approach creates a learning opportunity that both reinforces the habit of bringing materials and develops writing practice. The strategy aligns with research on parental involvement and routines: consistent home-school communication and routines increase students' organizational skills and thereby decrease chronic forgetfulness (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). Practical school routines—such as a designated “material check” at the start of class, a shared classroom supply bank, and explicit expectations communicated to parents—further reduce incidence of missing materials (Allington, 2012).

Managing overactivity while preserving student enthusiasm calls for re-establishing classroom agreements, explicit instruction in self-regulation, and structured turn-taking protocols. Cooperative learning structures (e.g., jigsaw, round robin) provide organized ways for highly active students to channel energy into leadership roles without monopolizing discourse, thereby supporting equitable participation (Gillies, 2016). Social-emotional learning (SEL) practices that model and rehearse self-regulation skills—breathing strategies, signal systems for speaking turns, and incremental reinforcement—help students internalize norms for respectful interaction (Denham et al., 2012). Such approaches preserve the benefits of high engagement while reducing disruption.

Combating drowsiness requires both pedagogical diversity and attention to out-of-school contributors (sleep, nutrition). Pedagogically, rotating modalities—interactive quizzes, role-plays, crossword puzzles linked to vocabulary, and short multimedia segments—reduce monotony and stimulate multiple cognitive channels, consistent with Mayer's (2009) multimedia learning theory and evidence on game-based engagement (Plass et al., 2015). Where persistent drowsiness suggests broader health or sleep deficits, referral pathways (school nurse, parental guidance) and brief classroom policies (e.g., short active breaks, brain-gym interludes) can mitigate immediate effects on attention (Curcio, Ferrara, & De Gennaro, 2006).

Supporting a learner with dyslexia requires a layered approach: targeted, evidence-based remediation; classroom accommodations; peer and family partnerships; and systemic backing. Effective dyslexia interventions typically involve explicit, systematic phonics, multi-sensory instruction, and scaffolded reading practice (Snowling & Hulme, 2012). In the observed classroom, appointing a learning assistant or teaching aide to provide regular small-group or one-to-one support would free the teacher to sustain whole-class instruction while ensuring the student receives intensive intervention. Peer-assisted learning strategies (structured, monitored peer tutoring) are cost-effective complements that also promote peer tolerance and social inclusion (Topping, 2005). Collaboration with parents—sharing goals, home practice strategies, and progress—aligns with family-engagement research and enhances generalization of gains (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2001). At the policy level, requesting resources from district or municipal education offices for adaptive materials and specialist support aligns with UNESCO's (2017) call for system-level investments to secure equity.

Implementation considerations are crucial. Teachers require practical lesson plans, short PD modules on differentiated and inclusive practices, and simple monitoring tools (checklists, quick progress probes) to evaluate impact. Interventions should be piloted, monitored, and iteratively refined with teacher feedback and student voice. When bundled—motivation, classroom routines, preparedness systems, activity variation, and targeted special-needs support—these solutions create a resilient, contextually appropriate model that is consistent with the Kurikulum Merdeka emphasis on local relevance, learner-centered design, and inclusivity (Kemendikbud, 2022). Ultimately, a combined, evidence-informed approach provides the best prospect for improving reading engagement and learning outcomes for all students.

### **3.4. Conclusion**

This study concludes that improving Indonesian language learning in primary schools requires a combination of engaging teaching methods, effective classroom management, and inclusive support. While various strategies were used successfully, challenges such as low reading interest, off-task behavior, lack of preparedness, overactivity, drowsiness, and limited support for special needs students persisted. The proposed solutions—ranging from game-based literacy activities to structured routines and targeted assistance—offer practical ways to address these issues. Overall,

creating an engaging, inclusive, and well-managed learning environment is essential for enhancing literacy and participation among young learners.

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