Early Reading Learning for Special Needs Students: Challenges on Inclusive Primary School during COVID-19 Pandemic

Dahlia Novarianing Asri
Universitas PGRI Madiun, Madiun, Indonesia

Bambang Eko Hari Cahyono
Universitas PGRI Madiun, Madiun, Indonesia

Rischa Pramudia Trisnani
Universitas PGRI Madiun, Madiun, Indonesia

Abstract---This study is meant to describe the types of disability faced by students in inclusive schools and the challenges faced by teachers as well as students in early reading learning for students with special needs in inclusive primary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research was conducted in 12 inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency, Indonesia. This research is a descriptive qualitative research in which psychological assessment consisting of intelligence tests CPM, and WISC, documentation, passive observation, and in-depth interviews were used to collect the data. The data were collected from informants, events or activities of student interaction in school, and documents of students' backgrounds and other related documents. The subjects of this study were 72 special needs students with special needs in 12 inclusive primary schools. The data were then analyzed using an interactive analysis model. The results showed that slow learning is the most common type of disability faced by students with special needs in inclusive elementary schools around Magetan Regency, Indonesia. During the COVID-19 pandemic, early reading learning was conducted through distance learning which encountered many obstacles, such as lack of mobile phone due to the low socioeconomic status of parents.

Keywords---COVID-19 pandemic, early reading learning, inclusive primary school, special need students.

1062

Introduction

Reading is one of important skills that must be mastered by students. Reading requires mastery, integration, and application of various skills and knowledge. Therefore, reading skills must be taught as early as possible before starting the basic education level. The National Reading Panel (NRP) of the National Institute of Child Health and Development (NICHD) identified five important aspects of effective reading, namely phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension (NICHD, 2000). Reading or teaching reading is a combination of these aspects. The NELP identified that there are six important predictors in determining reading abilities and skills that affect school success. Those predictors are alphabet knowledge, phonological awareness, rapid automatic naming of letters or numbers, rapid automatic naming of objects or colors, writing and phonological memory (Panel, 2008). Without mastering these skills, students will fail to understand reading levels Brown (2014), which will affect academic achievement and life success in general (Fawcett, 2003; Lyon, 2002; Niklas et al., 2016).

Early reading learning is part of reading activities conducted in the lower grades of primary school (grades I and II). There are 6 important factors that need to be understood to start the early stages of teaching early reading. They are physical, perceptual, conceptual, linguistic, and environmental factors (Shapiro et al., 2013). The reading ability developed at the early reading will greatly affect the ability to read further. The learning objectives at this stage are more emphasized on the ability technical reading that are limited to the naturality of pronunciation and intonation. Early reading development begins with the child's awareness and exploration of the environment to build the basis for learning to read. Therefore, Clementson (2010), states that early reading learning should be packaged specifically to make students confident and happy to conduct reading activities. Topics, text types, and types of exercises are selected to encourage students' reading desire, and are relevant to the students' age. This can be interpreted that children can develop their reading skills from an early age because they already have a literacy awareness (Magnifico et al., 2019). Early reading helps students expand their thinking skills, learn to concentrate, and expand students' vocabulary (Mwoma, 2017).

As the underlying ability, early reading ability really needs the teacher's attention. Without a strong basic reading skill, students will have difficulty in developing adequate reading skills at the advanced reading stage. Therefore, it is very essential for teacher of grade I and II to be able to teach early reading learning in the right way to provide an adequate basis for reading skills to their students. According to Fahrurrozi (2016), the success of early reading in lower grades of primary schools is caused by many factors including students, learning methods used by teachers, as well as facilities and infrastructure. Viewed from the student's aspect, the difficulty of reading at an early stage is usually found during assembling letters into words as most students haven't known letters, read some writing by spelling the letters and stammering while reading sentences in a simple paragraph. Judging from the aspect of the learning method used by the teacher, it shows that most teachers didn't use the right approach and method in teaching early reading. In addition, most teachers only used text books to teach reading

which caused boredom for students during the learning process. This condition will certainly be different for students with special needs in inclusive primary schools (Chauhan, 2011).

An inclusive school is a school which provides opportunities for all students, both students with special needs and regular students in the same classroom Galevska & Pesic (2018), and attend inclusive education according to their level regardless of physical and mental developmental disorders (Dapudong, 2014). Inclusive education has important implications for policy and special education in developed and developing countries (Seguin, 2011). Inclusive education aims to provide equal education opportunity and services to children with special needs in regular classes with friends of their age without having to differentiate between classes, and accessibility that supports learning, as well as creating a safe, comfortable and friendly environment for regular students and students with special needs. Inclusive education not only provides a place for students with special needs to make friends with regular students, but also learns in the same environment and participates fully in society while receiving education at their school (Hornby, 2015; Terpstra & Tamura, 2008). This can help students with special needs to imitate the positive behavior of regular students, feel part of a community, and build self-potential both in academic and non-academic aspects (Kucukera & Cifci Tekinarslan, 2015). Inclusive education can effectively provide benefits for students with special needs in increasing all potential in various aspects (Zakaria & Tahar, 2017).

In the implementation of inclusive education, it is very necessary to have good management. School management and classroom management play an important role in the acceptance of inclusive education in the school. Without the involvement of good management, the implementation of education in inclusive schools will not be properly conducted. The results of Chan & Yuen (2015), research show that the presence of shadow teachers who help the main teacher in the classroom, parental involvement, social interaction and support from all schools are the main keys to the success of inclusive education (Muhammad et al., 2020; Vaishya et al., 2020).

During the COVID-19 pandemic, early reading learning for inclusive elementary school students hasn't gone well because they experienced various obstacles and challenges. Based on interviews with teachers, information was obtained that during the COVID-19 pandemic, early reading learning could not run optimally because learning was conducted online which caused difficulty for teachers to instill early reading skills in students, especially students with special needs. During the COVID-19 pandemic, online learning is an effective option for teaching and learning. Some experts state that online learning can reach all rural areas and even remote areas (Dhawan, 2020). However, the implementation of online learning poses various challenges for both teachers and students. Not only teachers from regular schools, but also teachers for students with special needs with various types of disability disorders. The results of the interviews which was conducted with teachers showed that they had difficulty in implementing learning materials for early reading skills that were tailored to the special needs of students. On the other hand, the problems in online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic experienced by students were the lack of willingness to do

assignments, low motivation to learn, lack of skills in using technology, lack of face-to-face and interaction with teachers which limit their understanding of the reading material, and lack of support from parent. Therefore, this study aims to describe the types of disability disorders faced by students in inclusive schools and the challenges faced by teachers and students in early reading learning for students with special needs in inclusive primary schools during the COVID-19 pandemic (Connor et al., 2005; McGeown et al., 2012).

Method

This research was conducted for 6 months in 12 inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency, Indonesia. This research is a qualitative descriptive research which guides the researcher in providing a comprehensive summary of the topic, an accurate description of the event that would be agreed by most people who observe the event, and an explanation of the subjective meanings that participants attribute to the event (Sandelowski, 2000). This research was conducted with more emphasis on assessment of various types of disability disorders faced by students in the schools and the researchers' observations on the conditions of early reading learning in students with special needs. In addition, an analysis of documents related to the background of the research subject was also conducted (Emam & Mohamed, 2011; Unianu, 2012). The subjects of this study were 72 students with special needs in 12 inclusive elementary schools. The data of this study includes a number of information related to various disability disorders faced by the research subjects and the conditions of early reading learning during the Covid-19 pandemic. The types of data sources used in this study are:

- Informants as many as 12 form teachers and special shadow teachers.
- Events or activities for pre-reading learning activities.
- Documents of students' background and other related documents.

In accordance with the characteristics and types of data required, data collection techniques were conducted through:

- Psychological assessment consisting of CPM and WISC intelligence tests.
- Documentation.
- Passive role observation.
- In-depth interviews.

Data analysis was conducted using an interactive analysis model Miles & Huberman (1994), which was done in two stages, during data collection and after data collection. Data analysis was conducted through 3 activities that took place simultaneously:

- Data reduction.
- Data presentation.
- Drawing conclusions/verification.

The techniques chosen to check the validity of the data in this study are as follows:

- Extending the participation of researchers, so that the interaction between researchers and informants can take place more intensively.
- Observing diligently and carefully to ensure that the colledted data can reflect the phenomenon as it is.
- Triangulate data sources, which is done by comparing the results of psychological assessments with observations, interviews, and comparing with the contents of the documents used as research data sources.
- Examining findings through focus group discussions.

Results and Discussion

In Magetan Regency, there are 43 inclusive elementary schools with a total of 374 special needs students. In this study, 12 inclusive elementary schools were selected purposively as samples. Regional consideration were used to determine the sample which include 4 inclusive elementary schools in urban areas, 4 schools in the sub-district city area, and 4 schools in rural/mountain areas (Ruijs & Peetsma, 2009; Szumski et al., 2017). An assessment was conducted at the beginning of the study to determine the type of disorder in children with special needs. The assessment was conducted through the Colored Progressive Matrices (CPM) intelligence test and the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children (WISC), in collaboration with the Ceria Madiun psychology institute. Based on the results of the assessment, the types of disorders faced by the students can be mapped as follows.

Table 1
Type of disability faced by special needs students in inclusive primary school in Magetan

No	Type of disability	Total	Percentage
1	Slow Learner	59	81,94%
2	Learning Disability	2	2,78%
3	Autism	2	2,78%
4	Middle mental disability	5	6,94%
5	Dyslexia	2	2,78%
6	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder	2	2,78%

Table 1, shows that from 72 students with special needs who were used as research subjects, the most types of disability were slow learners, as many as 81.94%, moderate mental retardation 6.94%, learning difficulties 2.78%, autism 2.78%, dyslexia 2.78% and ADHD 2.78%. The percentage proportion the disorders types faced by students with special needs in the table above can be seen more clearly in Figure 1 below.
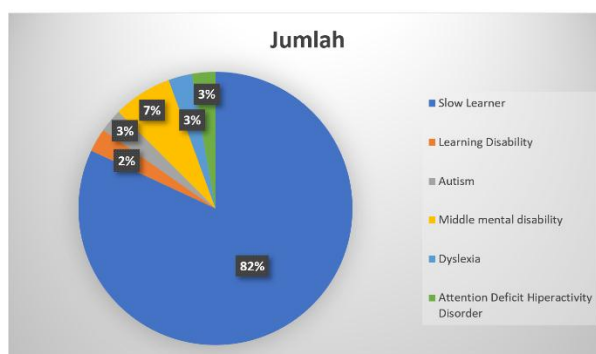
Figure 1. Percentage proportion of the disorder types faced by students with special needs in inclusive primary school in Magetan Regency

Table 1 and Figure 1, show that slow learning is the most common type of disorder faced by inclusive primary school students in Magetan Regency. Theoretically, slow learners could' not be categorized as students who need special education. Instead, they are students with disorder who are academically identified with an intelligence level below average, with an IQ score between 75-89 which is indicated by slower thinking skills compared to students in general (Dibia & Ajoku, 2018; Malik et al., 2012; Vasudevan, 2017). Slow learners are not considered as students who have mental retardation. Therefore, in terms of education, although slow learners need special education, they do not fit into the special education system and generally study in regular schools by adapting to slower learning abilities (Malik et al., 2012). They are generally slow when faced with tasks which require abstract, symbolic, and conceptual skills (Lenhard & Lenhard, 2013; Malik et al., 2012). Most of them have problems in math, reading, and have impaired coordination such as writing, doing sports, or wearing clothes (Ramlakshmi, 2013). Psychologically, slow learners are often quiet, shy, and difficult to make friends. Slow learners should not be made to feel neglected because it can create feelings of inferiority. They are very sensitive and self-aware of their weaknesses. This is due to low self-confidence and ultimately affects their self-esteem (Laurencin & Walker, 2020; Kim & Su, 2020).

Therefore, the responsibility of a teacher is to build students' self-confidence and ensure that they are not inferior to other friends (Amrita, 2011; Dibia & Ajoku, 2018; Ramlakshmi, 2013). The most important thing in learning with slow learners is the quality of teachers who are skilled and able to build communication and psychological comfort for students (Rozek & Stobäus, 2016; Thomas & Whitten, 2012). Academically, slow learner students show the characteristics of having limited cognitive capacity, poor memory, unable to concentrate, unable to express ideas clearly through words, poor imagination and vision of the future Malik et al., (2012), often show immaturity in relationships with other people, perform poorly because they cannot work on complex problems, work very slowly, and have difficulty in relating the subject matter that has been studied with the given task as a result of poor concentration ability (Ramlakshmi, 2013). Weak learning activities that appear in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects are manifested in the form of behavior either directly or indirectly in the learning process and learning outcomes (Rosada & Rosada, 2016).

The data shows that there are 15 teachers who assist students with special needs. The ratio of teachers to students shows good comparison with 1 to 4.9. the data also shows that there is only 1 teacher with special need education background, while 14 others are graduates of various fields of study. To improve the professionalism of the Special Assistance Teachers or shadow teachers, the Education, Youth and Sports department of Magetan has held some education and training to equip teachers with materials on inclusive education and mentoring students with special needs. As well as encourage and facilitate teachers to develop themselves as special companion teachers for students with special needs. Currently, all special assistant teachers in 43 inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency have had certificates as special assistant teachers (Danchikov et al., 2021; Elihami, 2021).

The results of interviews, document studies, and observations, show that the special assistant teachers at the inclusive primary schools in Magetan area have had appropriate competencies to provide assistance to students with special needs. The result of the interviews conducted to several teachers, the informants stated that ideally special assistant teachers should not only have good academic competence but also have high interest, patience, and attention to the students' learning development. It was further stated that special assistant teachers must diligently follow the development of inclusive school problems, have the skills to choose teaching methods which are appropriate to the types of disorders faced by students. This is supported by research results which state that inclusive education requires quality teachers who are skilled and able to build communication and psychological comfort for students (Rozek & Stobäus, 2016; Thomas & Whitten, 2012). A teacher can help and improve thespecial needs students' learning behavior by building self-confidence and emphasizing that they are not inferior to other students in the class. Teachers also need to show love and affection for them, interact intensely and pay attention to students individually, avoid frustrating situation for students, and increase their self-esteem.

After the assessment, research was conducted on early reading learning for students with special needs during the COVID-19 pandemic. Early reading learning is a reading activity conducted in the lower grades of elementary school (grades I and II). The learning objectives at this stage are emphasized on the ability of technical reading that are limited to the naturality of pronunciation and intonation. The Early reading skills developed by students in grades I and II will be the basis for learning to read in subsequent classes. Early reading should be done using simple techniques and learning materials, with the students' own words. The reading ability developed at the Early reading will greatly affect the ability to read further. As the ability that underlies the next ability, the early reading ability really needs the teacher's attention. Without strong basis, students will have difficulty to develop adequate reading skills at the advance level. Therefore, grades I and II teachers must be able to teach early reading learning in the right way to provide an adequate basis for reading skills to their students. This is supported by the opinion of Clementson (2010), which states that early reading learning should be packaged specifically to make students confident and happy to do reading activities. Topics, text types, and types of exercises are

selected to encourage students' reading desire, and are relevant to the age of the students.

According to teacher informants, the implementation of early reading in inclusive elementary schools in Magetan Regency before the pandemic was conducted in two periods, the period of reading without books and reading using books. Reading without books is done by teaching using media or teaching aids other than books, while reading with books is an activity of reading using books. The informant stated in the interview that basically, the early reading was given to students in grades 1 and II, along with writing and arithmetic. However, for students with special needs, early reading lessons can also be carried out until they are in high grade. Early reading learning before the pandemic was conducted with drills, continuous practice. It also uses letter cards and picture cards. Early reading learning for students with special needs is conducted in one class with other regular students. This condition becomes an obstacle for students with special needs because their competencies are different from regular students.

The informants understand that early reading in grades I and II of inclusive primary schools is intended to train students to master reading techniques, to practice the skills of singing or speaking written words or sentences well. The students' success in early reading allows students to have (1) basic knowledge that can be used as a basis for listening Indonesian language, (2) basic knowledge that can be used as a basis for speaking Indonesian, (3) basic knowledge that can be used as a basis for reading Indonesian language and (4) basic knowledge that can be used as a basis for writing in Indonesian. However, in reality all these goals have not been achieved properly. For this reason, teachers in some schools provide additional lessons for students with special needs in order to develop a good basic reading base and to help them catch up with their classmates. For example, in Sukowinangun 2 elementary school, out of 25 students with special needs, there are only a quarter of them who are somewhat fluent in reading, the rest are still need to improve their reading skills.

The teacher stated that there were many obstacles that they faced in conducting early reading learning for students with special needs. Each student with special needs has different obstacles, while only a few teachers understand these barriers. For example, during the early reading learning in school, the material is given through drilling which is not being applied at home as parents did not care and had no contribution to their children's studies. Most of these parents come from poor people with low education. To teach early reading skills, various media are needed, while the media available in this school is very limited. Schools lack of media to teach early reading, even though early reading skills are very important for children. Based on the observations result, most of the inclusive elementary schools in Magetan Regency have adequate infrastructure facilities to organize inclusive schools. Classrooms, playgrounds, and libraries are well maintained but the book collection is still very limited.

These obstacles are increasingly being faced by teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic is an anomaly, creating disorder and uncertainty. The uncertain situation due to the COVID-19 pandemic makes people no longer able to distinguish between holidays and working days. Since

there have been recommendations to work from home, study from home, and worship at home, the boundaries between work, holidays, work days, and off-days have become unclear. At the beginning, COVID-19 pandemic is a health crisis, but recently almost all sectors are affected, including the education sector. In Indonesia, the impact on the education sector due to the COVID-19 outbreak has been felt by all levels of school, starting from the elementary, secondary schools and universities. All levels of education from elementary school to university (university) have been negatively impacted because students are forced to study from home remotely due to the abolishment of face-to-face learning to prevent the transmission of COVID-19. This is also a challenge for teachers in inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency.

In the interview, the informant stated that he had not been able to do early reading lessons remotely because of equipment constraints. Not all students can use distance learning applications on their cellphones, and there are some who don't have cellphones as they have to use their parents' cellphone and the parents bring the cellphones to work. Most of the parents from those special need students come from average to low income families. The problems found in distance learning for students with special needs during the pandemic are supported by research by Yazcayir & Gurgur (2021), which states that there are many problems such as lack of access to computers and the internet, inability to communicate and lack of cooperation between teachers, students and parents. Therefore, during the pandemic, early reading learning is also conducted face-to-face through home visits. In addition, teachers also routinely give assignments to students through whatsapp groups, with parental assistance, although it has not run very well.

Informants stated that some impacts of distance learning activities from home, namely students feel forced to study remotely without adequate facilities, students have not been accustomed to distance learning culture because so far the learning system is implemented through face-to-face, students feel very bored as the school holidays are too long. There needs to be a learning media that attracts students in distance learning, especially early reading learning so that students are enthusiastic in learning. Balkist & Agustiani (2020), added that the lack of direct interaction and the lack of variety of learning media in distance learning caused students to feel bored. Distance learning also has an impact on parents, namely the additional cost of buying internet quota and parents must spend more time accompanying their children while studying from home. This will be a serious obstacle For teachers who are not proficient at using internet technology or social media as a learning tool. Many inclusive primary school teachers are not able to use distance learning tools and need assistance and training. This situation also occurs in early reading learning at school. Teacher must evaluate the effectiveness of distance early reading learning and adapt it to the learning needs of the students. This is important in order to meet the learning aspects such as knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

According to the informant, ideally in early reading learning, the teacher should not burden students with various burdensome tasks. In early reading learning, the teacher should not focus their goals on the completeness of curriculum achievements, but rather to provide a meaningful learning experience. Learning

from home is focused on life skills education, while learning activities and assignments can be adapted to the conditions of each school, by providing qualitative feedback, without having to be quantitative. The learning process at home does not change the way of learning in the classroom. That is, even though students stay at home, the teachers continue to teach to ensure that there is still interaction with students. This condition is a difficult task to be achieved by most inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency, especially schools located in rural areas and on the mountainous areas.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, it can be concluded that slow learning is the most common type of disorder faced by students with special needs in inclusive primary schools in Magetan Regency. Slow learners are not the same as students who need special education but rather students with academic disorder which is identified with a below average level of intelligence with an IQ score between 75-89 which is indicated by slower thinking skills than most students in general so they can study in inclusive schools. Almost all teachers stated that distance learning, especially in early reading learning, had many obstacles, especially limited facilities because many students did not have mobile phones. Therefore, teachers conduct learning by means of home visits, unfortunately, it did not run optimally because the ratio of teachers is not proportional to the number of students. This condition is very challenging for teachers especially to find innovative learning using interesting media so that students with special needs are not easily bored in following the learning process and can understand the early reading material easily. In addition, collaboration between teachers and parents is indispensable in assisting students during distance learning.

Acknowledgments

References

Amrita, G. (2011). How teachers can help slow learners to come out with flying colours. Educational and Schools.Clarity Digital.

Balkist, P. S., & Agustiani, N. (2020, October). Responses of students with special needs to online mathematics leaning during pandemic. In *Journal of Physics: Conference Series* (Vol. 1657, No. 1, p. 012031). IOP Publishing.

Brown, C. S. (2014). Language and literacy development in the early years: Foundational skills that support emergent readers. *Language and Literacy Spectrum, 24*, 35-49.

Chan, T., & Yuen, M. (2015). Inclusive Education in an International School: A Case Study from Hong Kong. *International Journal of special education, 30*(3), 86-97.

Chauhan, S. (2011). Slow learners: their psychology and educational programmes. *International journal of multidisciplinary research, 1*(8), 279-289.

Clementson, T. (2010). Natural Reading and Writing Skills Engslish Elementary Resource Book. Oxford University Press.

Connor, C. M., Son, S. H., Hindman, A. H., & Morrison, F. J. (2005). Teacher qualifications, classroom practices, family characteristics, and preschool experience: Complex effects on first graders' vocabulary and early reading outcomes. *Journal of School Psychology*, *43*(4), 343-375. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jsp.2005.06.001

Danchikov, E. A., Prodanova, N. A., Kovalenko, Y. N., & Bondarenko, T. G. (2021). Using different approaches to organizing distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic: opportunities and disadvantages. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, *5*(S1), 587-595. https://doi.org/10.37028/lingcure.v5nS1.1444

Dapudong, R. C. (2014). Teachers' knowledge and attitude towards inclusive education: Basis for an enhanced professional development program. *International Journal of Learning & Development*, *4*(4), 1-24.

Dhawan, S. (2020). Online learning: A panacea in the time of COVID-19 crisis. *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, *49*(1), 5-22.

Dibia, N. G., & Ajoku, M. U. (2018). TEACHERS'ROLE IN IDENTIFICATION AND SUPPORT FOR SLOW LEARNERS AT THE LOWER BASIC EDUCATION LEVELS: IMPLICATIONS FOR COUNSELLING. *European Journal of Education Studies*.

Elihami, E. (2021). Bibliometric analysis of islamic education learning loss in the COVID-19 pandemic. *Linguistics and Culture Review*, *5*(S1), 851-859. https://doi.org/10.37028/lingcure.v5nS1.1469

Emam, M. M., & Mohamed, A. H. H. (2011). Preschool and primary school teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education in Egypt: The role of experience and self-efficacy. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, *29*, 976-985. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2011.11.331

Fahrurrozi, F. (2016). PEMBELAJARAN MEMBACA PERMULAAN DI SEKOLAH DASAR. *Jurnal Ilmiah PGSD*, *10*(2), 111-118.

Fawcett, A. J. (2003). The international adult literacy survey in Britain: Impact on policy and practice. *Dyslexia*, *9*(2), 99-121.

Galevska, N. A., & Pesic, M. I. (2018). Assessing children with special educational needs in the inclusive classrooms. *Ss. Cyril and Methodius University*.

Hornby, G. (2015). Inclusive special education: development of a new theory for the education of children with special educational needs and disabilities. *British Journal of Special Education*, *42*(3), 234-256.

Kim, S. W., & Su, K. P. (2020). Using psychoneuroimmunity against COVID-19. *Brain, behavior, and immunity*, *87*, 4-5. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bbi.2020.03.025

Kucukera, S., & Cifci Tekinarslan, I. (2015). Comparison of the Self-Concepts, Social Skills, Problem Behaviors, and Loneliness Levels of Students with Special Needs in Inclusive Classrooms. *Educational Sciences: Theory and Practice*, *15*(6), 1559-1573.

Laurencin, C. T., & Walker, J. M. (2020). A Pandemic on a Pandemic: Racism and COVID-19 in Blacks. *Cell systems*, *11*(1), 9-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cels.2020.07.002

Lenhard, W., & Lenhard, A. (2013). Learning difficulties. *Learning Disabilities*, *25*, 33-45.

Lyon, G. R. (2002). Reading development, reading difficulties, and reading instruction educational and public health issues. *Journal of School Psychology*, *1*(40), 3-6.

Magnifico, A. M., Woodard, R., & McCarthey, S. (2019). Teachers as co-authors of student writing: How teachers' initiating texts influence response and revision in an online space. *Computers and Composition*, *52*, 107-131.

Malik, N. I., Rehman, G., & Hanif, R. (2012). Effect of academic interventions on the developmental skills of slow learners. *Pakistan Journal of Psychological Research*, 135-151.

McGeown, S. P., Johnston, R. S., & Medford, E. (2012). Reading instruction affects the cognitive skills supporting early reading development. *Learning and Individual Differences, 22*(3), 360-364. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2012.01.012

Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook*. sage.

Muhammad, S., Long, X., & Salman, M. (2020). COVID-19 pandemic and environmental pollution: A blessing in disguise?. *Science of the total environment*, *728*, 138820. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.scitotenv.2020.138820

Mwoma, T. (2017). Children's reading ability in early primary schooling: Challenges for a Kenyan rural community. *Issues in Educational Research*, *27*(2), 347-364.

National Reading Panel (US), National Institute of Child Health, Human Development (US), National Reading Excellence Initiative, National Institute for Literacy (US), United States. Public Health Service, & United States Department of Health. (2000). *Report of the National Reading Panel: Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction: Reports of the subgroups*. National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, National Institutes of Health.

Niklas, F., Cohrssen, C., & Tayler, C. (2016). The sooner, the better: Early reading to children. *Sage Open*, *6*(4), 2158244016672715.

Panel, N. E. L. (2008). Developing early literacy: Report of the national early literacy panel. *National Institute for Literacy, Washington, DC*.

Ramlakshmi, T. B. (2013). Slow learners: role of teachers in developing the language skills. *Shanlax International Journal of English*, *2*(1), 21-28.

Rosada, D., & Rosada, U. (2016). Diagnosis Of Learningdifficulties And Guidance Learningservices To Slow Learner Student. *Journalof Guidance and Counselin*, 2442-7802.

Rozek, M., & Stobäus, C. D. (2016). Teachers dealing with learning difficulties during the process of schooling. *Creative Education*.

Ruijs, N. M., & Peetsma, T. T. (2009). Effects of inclusion on students with and without special educational needs reviewed. *Educational Research Review, 4*(2), 67-79. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2009.02.002

Sandelowski, M. (2000). Whatever happened to qualitative description?. *Research in nursing & health, 23*(4), 334-340.

Seguin, J. A. (2011). Inclusive Education: International Policy and Practice. *Journal of Educational Administration*.

Shapiro, L. R., Carroll, J. M., & Solity, J. E. (2013). Separating the influences of prereading skills on early word and nonword reading. *Journal of experimental child psychology, 116*(2), 278-295.

Szumski, G., Smogorzewska, J., & Karwowski, M. (2017). Academic achievement of students without special educational needs in inclusive classrooms: A meta-

analysis. *Educational research review, 21,* 33-54. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2017.02.004

Terpstra, J. E., & Tamura, R. (2008). Effective social interaction strategies for inclusive settings. *Early Childhood Education Journal, 35*(5), 405-411.

Thomas, G., & Whitten, J. (2012). Learning support for students with learning difficulties in India and Australia: Similarities and differences. *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives, 11*(1), 3-21.

Unianu, E. M. (2012). Teachers' attitudes towards inclusive education. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences, 33,* 900-904. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.01.252

Vaishya, R., Javaid, M., Khan, I. H., & Haleem, A. (2020). Artificial Intelligence (AI) applications for COVID-19 pandemic. *Diabetes & Metabolic Syndrome: Clinical Research & Reviews, 14*(4), 337-339. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dsx.2020.04.012

Vasudevan, A. (2017). Slow learners-causes, problems and educational programmes. *International Journal of Applied Research, 3*(12), 308-313.

Yazcayir, G., & Gurgur, H. (2021). Students with Special Needs in Digital Classrooms during the COVID-19 Pandemic in Turkey. *Pedagogical Research, 6*(1).

Zakaria, N. A., & Tahar, M. M. (2017). The effects of inclusive education on the self-concept of students with special educational needs. *Journal of ICSAR, 1*(1), 25-31.