

**LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT IN PRESCHOOL (5-7 YEARS) CHILDREN WITH  
DYSLEXIA: A PSYCHOLINGUISTIC STUDY**

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**Abstract**

The main function of language is to communicate and interact with others. The process of language acquisition begins in childhood to adulthood. Dyslexia is one type of language disorder that can be an obstacle to children's language development. Dyslexia affects the neurological function of the brain that functions to process language. Dyslexia also affects children's writing ability. The purpose of this study is to describe and explain what dyslexia is, what are the symptoms, causes, and dyslexia treatment efforts. This study uses a literature review research type. The results of the study showed that children with dyslexia often face difficulties in recognizing letters, spelling words, and understanding texts. Environmental factors, such as family support and learning methods, also affect children's language development. This study is expected to provide insight to teachers and parents about the importance of the right approach in helping children with dyslexia learn language better.

**Keyword:** Psycholinguistics, Dyslexia, Language Disorders, Children, Language Development

**Article History**

Received: Januari 2025

Reviewed: Januari 2025

Published: Januari 2025

Plagiarism Checker No 234

Prefix DOI: Prefix DOI:

10.8734/ SINDORO.v3i9.252

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**Publish by: SINDORO**



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ISSN 3025-6488



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**INTRODUCTION**

**A. Background**

Language skills are an important aspect of a child's development, which not only includes speaking skills but also reading, writing, and understanding language as a whole. Every child has the potential to speak to convey information orally or in writing, but this potential will not develop if it is not supported by the environment (Djamarah, 2002, p. 48). Reading and writing are two of the four language skills. Reading is a process of obtaining messages through written language (Tarigan, 2015, p. 7). Language functions as two modalities, namely oral and written. We acquire the ability to hear before we can read and write. Language makes us social beings (Indah, 2017, p. 6). Children's language ability can be supported by various factors. These factors include health factors and intelligence factors. Of these factors, the most dominant factor influencing children's language ability is health factors. Health factors in this case are specifically brain health. If the brain experiences a disorder or disease, it is certain that a child's ability to speak will decrease or even be unable to master the language at all. However, not all children can develop this ability optimally. One of the disorders that is often found is dyslexia.

According to (Haifa et al., 2020, p. 23) Dyslexia comes from the Greek word dyslexia; "dys" which means difficulty and "lexis" which means language. According to Bryan & Bryan, one form of this difficulty is in learning words and sentences and is slow and problematic in language development, especially in writing and spelling. According to (Handayani et al, 2019), Dyslexia is defined as a syndrome of difficulty in learning about word and sentence components. According to various studies, dyslexia is often detected in preschool children, namely when children begin to be introduced to formal reading and writing skills. In preschool children, a history of language delay or the absence of the sound of a word (difficulty playing rhyming words, confusion in dealing with similar words, difficulty learning to recognize letters) for example the word "kagak" is pronounced "gagak" accompanied by a history of family suffering from dyslexia, indicates a significant risk factor for suffering from dyslexia. Next, in school-age children, complaints are usually in the form of a lack of ability to perform reading at school, for example the word "ayam" is read as "maya", but parents and teachers are often unaware that the child is having difficulty reading. Through observations of reading difficulties experienced by children, there is a tendency that the trigger for dyslexia is a neurobiological disorder, which is characterized by difficulty in recognizing words correctly, both in spelling and encoding symbols. The reading difficulties experienced by dyslexic children have nothing to do with their intelligence level. Even in some cases, dyslexic children are much smarter than other normal children.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This research explores dyslexia through literature review. literature review is a survey of scholarly sources on a specific topic. It provides an overview of current knowledge, allowing you to identify relevant theories, methods, and gaps in the existing research that you can later apply to your paper, thesis, or dissertation topic. Data were collected through journals and scientific articles found on Google Scholar ([scholar.google.com](https://scholar.google.com)) by entering the keywords "symptoms" or "impacts" as well as "dyslexia" and "children". The articles and journals were taken in the last 10 years from 2010-2021, which were analyzed starting from the definition of dyslexia, risk factors for dyslexia, how to detect dyslexia early, and the influence of dyslexia on children's future development.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### A. THE SYMPTOMS OF DYSLEXIA

Dyslexic children have different symptoms from each other. The only trait that they have in common is their very low reading ability considering their age and intelligence. Every child has a tendency to have dyslexia, and there are also children who are not dyslexic but have difficulty reading. The symptoms of dyslexia include:

1. Hesitation and slowness in speaking
2. Difficulty choosing the right words to convey the meaning of what is being said. Problems in determining direction (up - down) and time (before - after, now - yesterday)
3. Continuous spelling errors, such as the word "elephant" is pronounced as "gagah". the word "ibu" is pronounced as "ubi", the word "pipa" becomes "papi"

4. Reversing similar letters, words, and numbers, for example b with p, u with n, the word kuda with daku, palu with lupa

Symptoms of dyslexia are related to the following areas: vision, reading, writing, spelling, hearing, speaking, writing, balance, movement, memory. Teachers and parents play a major role in observing symptoms of dyslexia. During the teaching process, teachers and parents can recognize the following warning signs of dyslexia:

1. Letters and numbers are distorted or reversed in shape or order
2. Inconsistent or broken spelling
3. Skipping words or lines when reading, poor concentration, or words are blurred
4. Words are doubled or changed in size
5. Hearing meaningful sounds or speech,
6. Left-right confusion
7. Difficulty judging distance, memorizing instructions, repeating long words, and eventually illegible handwriting.

Children with dyslexia have difficulties in areas of reading (and spelling) that are inconsistent with age and IQ. Children with an IQ scale of average or above average if they experience problems in reading and spelling are classified as dyslexic. Before learning to read, children have a well-developed phonological knowledge (about the sounds of words) that is related to their semantic system (meaning of words). In people with dyslexia, children are slow to learn to translate words and generalize new words that they have never seen before. In addition to the lack of ability in spelling words, seen from the types of errors that occur, it can be seen that there is a factor of low concentration in writing. The problem of low concentration in dyslexic children is also supported by the following statements from experts. According Subyantoro (2013:193) stated that, "dyslexic children tend to have easily distracted attention or fail to complete work completely." This problem is especially common when it comes to writing and reading activities. Letters become a kind of boring and quite scary specter for dyslexic children.

Dyslexia is not a disease but a neurobiological disorder. Not all cases of dyslexia are caused by neurological developmental problems, but some arise from experiencing ear infections in early language development (Indah, 2017, p. 146). These difficulties are usually caused by deficiencies in the phonological component. Dyslexia cannot be cured, but can only be improved. Research in developed countries shows that early detection of dyslexia and good treatment will also give good results. On the other hand, as explained above, if not detected quickly, it will result in social and emotional disorders. These social and emotional disorders can foster an attitude of low self-confidence, instability, being easily offended, feeling stupid and becoming a victim of bullying by friends.

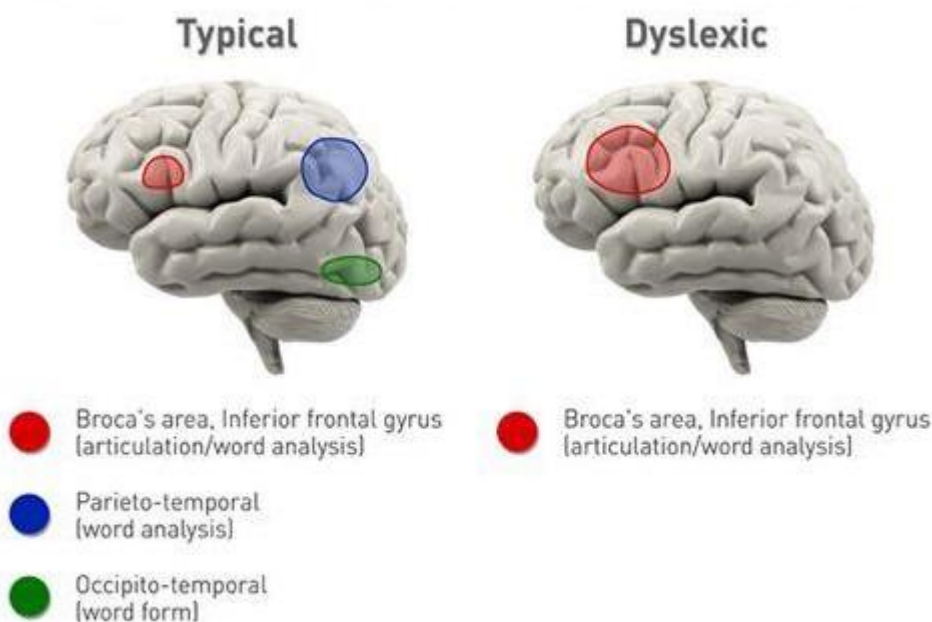
## **B. CAUSES OF DYSLEXIA**

There is no single type of test that is specific to diagnose dyslexia. The diagnosis of dyslexia is made clinically based on stories from parents, observations and psychometric tests conducted by pediatricians or psychologists. In addition to pediatricians and psychologists, other professionals should also be involved in the observation and assessment of children with dyslexia, namely pediatric neurologists (to detect and rule out neurological disorders),

audiologists (to detect and rule out hearing disorders), ophthalmologists (to detect and rule out visual disorders), and of course school teachers (Shaywitz S. 2003).

Dyslexic children at preschool age show language delays or have problems learning words that sound similar or have problems pronouncing words, and have difficulty recognizing letters in the alphabet, accompanied by a history of dyslexia in the family. The main complaint in dyslexic children at school age is usually related to school achievement, and parents usually "don't accept" it if the teacher reports that the cause of the decline in achievement is difficulty reading. Research by KU Leuven in Belgium (Dewi, 2010) also found that dyslexia is caused by connectivity problems related to the language processing area in the brain. A comparison of normal brains and those affected by dyslexia can be seen below:

### Typical Brain / Dyslexic Brain comparison



The causes of children experiencing dyslexia are early developmental factors that involve speech delays due to the inconsistent use of multiple languages, as well as neurological factors that involve difficulties in visual-motor processing and understanding the sequence of letters or words, can contribute to children experiencing dyslexia. According to (Leoziana, 2017) explains that one of the causes of children experiencing dyslexia is a multilingual environment. This means that children who grow up in an environment that uses several languages (bilingual or multilingual) may have difficulty understanding commands and learning language in a consistent context, causing children to have dyslexia. According to (Oktamarina & Rosalina, 2022) explains that one of the causes of children having dyslexia is biological factors, such as abnormalities in brain function and structure that contribute to the emergence of dyslexia. In addition, according to (Haifa, Mulyadiprana, & Respati, 2020) there are 3 factors that cause children to experience dyslexia, namely:

- 1) **Biological factors**, namely a family history of dyslexia, problematic pregnancies, and quite relevant health problems,

- 2) **Cognitive factors**, namely language articulation patterns and lack of phonological awareness in the individual concerned
- 3) **Behavioral factors**, namely problems in social relationships, stress which is an implication of learning difficulties, and motor disorders.

### C. DYSLEXIA TREATMENT EFFORTS

In the United States (US), a method has been developed to help people with dyslexia, developed by the Dore Achievement Centers. This method is based on the assumption that dyslexic children have a lack of activity in the right side of the brain called the cerebellum, which only contains 50 percent of the brain's nerves. With this method, children are stimulated in that part of the brain, with a number of learning. Training can be given to dyslexic children, by setting aside time to teach them to read. However, this training should not be forced if the child is in an unhealthy condition so that they are susceptible to negative emotions. The training is carried out in stages, namely by being positive and giving appreciation when the child can read correctly. Then, the child is taught to read and helped to appreciate every pronunciation of the word from his mouth. In this training, story books can be used and started to be read out loud first to attract the child's interest. The reading of the story is done before the child goes to bed at night, to help the verbal deposition in his memory, and to make this activity as interesting as possible.

According to (Kadek Yati Fitria Dewi, 2023) there are several things that can be done in treatment efforts, as follows:

#### 1) Orton-Gillingham

This therapy applies techniques to teach reading to people with dyslexia, gradually. In this method, people with dyslexia have to match letters with sounds and recognize how to pronounce the letters. This method focuses on teaching children to read at the word level, and is not the only therapy that will be done. In addition, the Orton-Gillingham method also uses various ways to help children learn, for example by touch.

#### 2) Multisensory instruction

This method teaches children to use all their senses such as touch sight, hearing, smell, and movement to help them learn. Dyslexics will learn more effectively if the information is given, received by several sensors continuously. This method allows participants who undergo it to learn using their own way. This will allow children to learn to use their strongest senses and improve the abilities of their weakest senses.

#### 3) Phonic therapy

Phonic therapy is a method that utilizes children's visual and auditory abilities by naming letters according to their reading sounds. For example, the letter B is pronounced "be", the letter C is pronounced "ce", and so on. In addition, children will also be taught several things such as spelling, reading, writing, understanding letters and the arrangement of letters in a word, and composing sentences to understand new vocabulary.

#### 4) Visual and auditory therapy

Children with dyslexia are generally not free from hearing problems and vision. You can give visual and auditory therapy to help your child recognize letters and read the letters in a word or sentence.

**CONCLUSION**

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that Dyslexia is a learning disability that primarily concerns certain language basics, which affects the child's ability to learn words and read. There is a tendency for the causes of dyslexia, namely biological factors, cognitive factors and behavioral factors. And it's important to remember that neurological factors are not a fault or deficiency in children with dyslexia. It's a difference in the way the brain processes certain information, which can affect their ability to read, spell, and understand written language. With the right intervention and educational support, children with dyslexia can learn to overcome their difficulties and reach their full potential. Symptoms of dyslexia may be difficult to recognize before a child enters school, but some early signs can identify the problem. When a child reaches school age, the child's teacher may be the first to notice the problem.

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