



The Study of Indonesian Phonology, Spelling, Morphology, and Syntax in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah and Elementary School Learning

Nur Syaidah, nursyaidah@uinsyahada.ac.id, UIN Syahada Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia

Zaskiyah Siregar, saskiasiregar066@gmail.com, UIN Syahada Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia

Siti Aminah Pulungan, sitiaminahpyb59@gmail.com, UIN Syahada Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia

Masniari Gultom, masniarigultom7@gmail.com, UIN Syahada Padangsidimpuan, Indonesia

Abstract: This article examines four fundamental linguistic aspects of the Indonesian language, namely phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax, as well as their implementation in teaching and learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels. These four aspects constitute essential components that students need to master as the foundation of comprehensive Indonesian language literacy. Through a literature review and theoretical analysis, this article describes the fundamental concepts of each linguistic aspect, identifies various challenges faced by teachers and students in the learning process, and formulates effective, contextual, and age-appropriate instructional strategies. The findings indicate that the teaching of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax is more effective when implemented in an integrated, contextual, and student-centered manner. Furthermore, MI/SD teachers are required to possess adequate knowledge of basic linguistics and the ability to design engaging, interactive, and meaningful learning activities. This study is expected to contribute to the development of more effective and higher-quality Indonesian language instruction at the MI/SD level.

Keywords: Phonology; Spelling; Morphology; Syntax; Indonesian Language Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Indonesian, as the national language and the medium of instruction in the educational system, plays a crucial role in the lives of Indonesian people. Language functions not only as a means of communication but also as a tool for thinking, learning, and developing students' knowledge and character. In the field of education, proficiency in using Indonesian correctly and appropriately is one of the key factors determining students' success in understanding learning materials, as nearly all educational activities are delivered through language. Therefore, Indonesian language instruction at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels serves as an essential foundation that must be provided optimally from an early age. Through effective language learning, students can develop literacy skills that serve as a primary asset for keeping pace with future advancements in science and technology (Alwi & Sugono, 2021).

From a linguistic perspective, Indonesian possesses a well-organized and systematic language structure. This system consists of various interconnected linguistic levels that form an integrated whole. Among the branches of linguistics, phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax are the most fundamental aspects in Indonesian language learning at the elementary education level. Phonology deals with speech sounds used in oral communication, spelling regulates the proper conventions of written language, morphology studies word formation and structural changes in words, while syntax examines the relationships among words in forming meaningful phrases, clauses, and sentences. These four aspects constitute the primary foundation for developing students' overall language competence.

Mastery of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax is closely related to the development of language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Effective reading skills require not only the recognition of letters and words but also an understanding of the sound system of the language. Likewise, writing skills require mastery of spelling conventions, appropriate word formation, and the ability to construct effective sentences. In other words, students' success in developing literacy skills is greatly influenced by their mastery of these fundamental linguistic aspects. The better students understand language structures, the greater their ability to use Indonesian effectively in both communicative and academic contexts.

At the MI and SD levels, the teaching of linguistic aspects cannot be separated from the development of foundational literacy skills. Literacy is not merely the ability to read and write but also the ability to understand, process, and communicate information effectively. Therefore, the teaching of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax should be designed contextually and in accordance with the developmental characteristics of elementary school students. Teachers are expected to connect linguistic concepts with students' real-life experiences so that learning becomes more meaningful and easier to understand.

Nevertheless, the implementation of linguistic instruction in schools still faces various challenges. One of the most common issues is the limited understanding of basic linguistic concepts among some teachers. This condition often leads Indonesian language instruction to focus more on memorizing rules than on

developing conceptual understanding among students. As a result, students frequently encounter difficulties in applying language rules appropriately in real communication situations. Furthermore, excessively theoretical instruction may reduce students' interest in learning because it is perceived as less engaging and less relevant to their daily lives.

Another frequently encountered problem is the high incidence of language errors made by students, both in oral and written communication. These errors may include inaccurate pronunciation, improper use of spelling conventions that do not conform to the General Guidelines for Indonesian Spelling (*Pedoman Umum Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia*), incorrect word formation, and ineffective sentence construction. Such issues indicate that greater attention must be given to the mastery of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax within Indonesian language instruction at the elementary level (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022).

On the other hand, developments in information and communication technology have introduced new challenges to Indonesian language learning. The widespread use of social media and digital platforms has given rise to more informal language varieties that do not always adhere to standard language conventions. This phenomenon can influence students' language habits, particularly in the use of spelling and sentence structure. Therefore, schools play a strategic role in guiding students to use Indonesian properly while remaining aware of language developments occurring in society. The teaching of basic linguistics serves as an important effort to foster language awareness from an early age.

The urgency of discussing phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax has increased with the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which places literacy as a core competency that students must master. The Merdeka Curriculum emphasizes student-centered, contextual, flexible, and holistic competency-based learning. Within this framework, teachers need a deep understanding of fundamental linguistic concepts to design innovative, creative, and learner-oriented instructional activities. Language learning is no longer limited to teaching rules but also aims to help students use language as a tool for thinking, communicating, and solving problems in everyday life (Suryaman, 2023).

Based on the discussion above, the study of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax in Indonesian language learning at the MI/SD level is highly important. A comprehensive understanding of these four linguistic aspects is expected to assist teachers in improving the quality of Indonesian language instruction while simultaneously supporting the optimal development of students' literacy skills. This article aims to examine the fundamental concepts of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax, analyze their implementation in MI/SD learning contexts, and propose effective instructional strategies that are relevant to the demands of twenty-first-century education.

METHODS

This study employed a library research method with a descriptive qualitative approach. This method was selected because the study focused on

examining, analyzing, and interpreting various concepts, theories, and previous research findings related to phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax in Indonesian language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels. Library research enables researchers to obtain a comprehensive understanding of the development of linguistic theories and their implementation in Indonesian language teaching practices. Through this approach, the study seeks to explore and synthesize relevant scholarly perspectives in order to provide a deeper understanding of fundamental linguistic aspects and their role in supporting students' language and literacy development.

The data sources in this study consisted of secondary data obtained from various relevant academic publications, including linguistics textbooks, Indonesian language teaching books, national and international journal articles, previous research reports, conference proceedings, and official documents related to educational policies and curriculum implementation. The selected literature was chosen based on its relevance, credibility, academic quality, and direct connection to the research topic. These sources provided accurate and comprehensive information regarding phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax within the context of elementary education.

Data collection was conducted through a documentation study by identifying, selecting, and gathering references that corresponded to the focus of the research. All collected sources were then examined critically, classified according to thematic categories, and reviewed to identify relationships between linguistic theories and their practical application in Indonesian language instruction at the MI/SD level. This stage also aimed to identify challenges, problems, and instructional strategies related to the teaching of these linguistic aspects in elementary education.

The data were analyzed using content analysis, a technique that systematically examines the content of written sources to obtain an in-depth understanding of concepts and practices related to phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax in language learning. The collected data were reduced, categorized, organized, and presented descriptively before conclusions were drawn based on recurring themes and patterns found across the analyzed literature. This analytical process enabled the researcher to develop a comprehensive picture of the importance of mastering fundamental linguistic aspects in supporting literacy development among MI/SD students.

The findings of the analysis are presented narratively and systematically to explain the fundamental concepts of each linguistic aspect, the challenges encountered in the teaching and learning process, and effective instructional strategies that align with the developmental characteristics of elementary school students. Therefore, this study is expected to contribute both theoretically and practically to the improvement of Indonesian language education and to support the development of more effective and high-quality language learning practices in MI and SD environments.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Phonology and Its Implementation in Indonesian Language Learning at the MI/SD Level

Phonology is one of the branches of linguistics that studies the sound system of a language and the functions of those sounds within the language. In general, phonology examines how speech sounds are produced, used, and organized to distinguish meaning. In linguistic studies, phonology encompasses two major areas: phonetics and phonemics. Phonetics investigates speech sounds from physical, physiological, and acoustic perspectives without considering their meaning-distinguishing functions, whereas phonemics studies speech sounds as the smallest functional units that differentiate meaning within a language. Thus, phonology not only addresses how sounds are articulated but also how they function within a language system to facilitate communication among its speakers (Muslich, 2020).

The Indonesian language possesses a relatively simple and systematic phonological structure compared to many other languages. Indonesian has six primary vowel phonemes, namely /a/, /i/, /u/, /e/, /ə/, and /o/, as well as a number of consonant phonemes that can occur in different positions within words. The regular correspondence between letters and sounds in Indonesian makes the processes of learning to read and write relatively easier than in languages with more complex orthographic systems. Nevertheless, understanding the sound system remains a crucial aspect of language learning because it serves as the foundation for students' language development, particularly at the elementary level. A strong command of phonology helps students understand the relationship between written symbols and the sounds they represent, thereby supporting literacy acquisition effectively (Chaer, 2021).

In the context of elementary education, phonological instruction plays a strategic role because it forms the basis for reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills. During the early years of education in Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary Schools (SD), students are introduced to language sounds through activities such as listening, imitating, pronouncing, and recognizing the relationship between sounds and letters. This ability is commonly referred to as phonological awareness, which is the capacity to recognize and manipulate the sound structures of spoken language. Phonological awareness is considered one of the most important early literacy skills because it helps students understand that words are composed of identifiable and manipulable sound units.

Phonological awareness develops gradually according to students' age and cognitive development. It includes the ability to recognize similarities and differences in sounds, identify initial and final sounds in words, segment words into syllables, blend syllables into words, and recognize individual phonemes within words. For example, students may learn to distinguish the initial sounds in the words *buku* (book) and *susu* (milk), or segment the word *membaca* (to read) into its syllables *mem-ba-ca*. These skills are essential for beginning reading instruction because they enable students to understand the sound structure of language more deeply and systematically.

Numerous studies in education and psycholinguistics have demonstrated a strong relationship between phonological awareness and early reading

achievement. Children who possess well-developed phonological awareness generally find it easier to recognize words, decode written text, and comprehend reading materials. Conversely, limited phonological awareness is often associated with reading difficulties among elementary school children. Therefore, the development of phonological skills should become a major priority in Indonesian language instruction, particularly in the lower grades of MI and SD (Ehri, 2021).

The implementation of phonology instruction in MI/SD should involve engaging, enjoyable, and developmentally appropriate learning activities. Teachers can utilize language games, children's songs, simple poetry, picture books, and read-aloud activities to help students recognize and distinguish speech sounds. For example, students may be asked to identify words that begin with the same sound, create simple rhymes, or classify words according to similar sound patterns. Such activities not only strengthen phonological awareness but also foster students' interest and motivation in learning Indonesian from an early age.

A play-based instructional approach is particularly suitable for MI/SD students because it aligns with the cognitive characteristics of children who are generally in the concrete operational stage of development. At this stage, students learn more effectively through direct experiences and interactions with their environment. Therefore, teachers should create active, creative, and enjoyable learning environments that allow students to explore phonological concepts without feeling overwhelmed by abstract theories. The use of instructional media such as letter cards, pictures, educational videos, and interactive learning applications can further enhance the effectiveness of phonology instruction.

Despite its importance, phonology instruction in MI/SD also faces several challenges. One of the most common challenges is the influence of local languages spoken by students in their daily lives. Indonesia is a multilingual nation with hundreds of regional languages, and many students enter school with different mother tongues. Differences between the sound systems of local languages and standard Indonesian often affect students' pronunciation of Indonesian words. For example, some students may experience difficulty distinguishing certain vowel sounds or pronouncing specific consonants according to standard Indonesian norms. Such conditions require teachers to provide special attention and support so that the transition from local languages to Indonesian can occur naturally and effectively without creating learning barriers (Kridalaksana, 2022).

To address these challenges, teachers need to implement systematic and research-based phonological instructional strategies. One of the most widely recommended approaches is systematic phonics instruction, which explicitly and progressively teaches the relationships between letters and sounds. Through this method, students are introduced to letter-sound correspondences beginning with the simplest patterns and gradually advancing to more complex ones. Systematic phonics instruction has been proven effective in improving early reading skills because it helps students understand the fundamental mechanisms of word formation and pronunciation. Moreover, phonics instruction can be integrated with meaningful reading activities so that students not only recognize sounds but also comprehend the meaning of the texts they read.

In conclusion, phonology is a fundamental linguistic component in Indonesian

language learning at the MI and SD levels. A strong foundation in phonology supports the development of reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills, all of which are essential for literacy development. Therefore, teachers must possess adequate knowledge of phonological concepts and be capable of designing engaging, contextual, and learner-centered instructional activities. Through effective phonology instruction, students are expected to build a solid literacy foundation that will support their academic success at higher levels of education.

Spelling and Its Implementation in Indonesian Language Learning at the MI/SD Level

Spelling is a set of rules that governs the conventions of written language, including the use of letters, word formation, punctuation, borrowed words, and terminology. In the context of language use, spelling serves as a guideline that ensures consistency and accuracy in written communication, enabling readers to understand messages clearly and effectively. Unlike spoken language, which is supported by nonverbal elements such as intonation, facial expressions, and gestures, written language relies heavily on correct spelling conventions to convey meaning. Therefore, mastery of spelling is a crucial factor in determining the quality of written communication. Good spelling skills not only reflect an individual's literacy competence but also demonstrate a positive attitude toward the proper and correct use of the Indonesian language.

The Indonesian spelling system has undergone several revisions and improvements in response to language development and societal needs. The currently applied system is the Indonesian Spelling System (*Ejaan Bahasa Indonesia* or EBI), which was most recently updated by the Language Development and Fostering Agency in 2022. This system is the continuation of earlier spelling systems, including the Van Ophuijsen Spelling System, the Soewandi Spelling System, and the Enhanced Spelling System (*Ejaan yang Disempurnakan* or EYD). In practice, EBI regulates five main aspects: the use of letters, word writing conventions, punctuation, the writing of borrowed words, and the writing of terms. These guidelines serve as an important reference in all Indonesian language learning activities, particularly at the elementary education level, where students begin developing their literacy skills (Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, 2022).

At the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels, spelling instruction plays a vital role in developing students' writing abilities. Effective writing is not determined solely by the quality of ideas and content but also by the correct application of spelling conventions. Through spelling instruction, students learn how to write words, sentences, and paragraphs in accordance with standard Indonesian language rules. This learning process serves as a foundation for the development of more advanced writing skills in subsequent levels of education. Therefore, introducing and habituating correct spelling usage should be carried out gradually and continuously from the earliest years of elementary schooling.

In classroom practice, various spelling errors are still commonly found among MI/SD students. One of the most frequent errors involves the incorrect use of capital letters, such as failing to capitalize the first word of a sentence or proper nouns, or

unnecessarily using capital letters within sentences. In addition, many students experience difficulty distinguishing between prepositions such as *di*, *ke*, and *dari*, which should be written separately, and prefixes such as *di-* and *ke-*, which should be attached to the base word. These errors often occur because students acquire language habits from everyday communication rather than through systematic understanding of spelling rules.

Another common issue involves the improper use of punctuation marks. Many students do not fully understand the functions of periods, commas, question marks, and exclamation marks in constructing meaning within sentences. As a result, their writing may lack clarity and coherence. Errors in the writing of affixed words and borrowed words are also frequently observed. These findings indicate that spelling instruction cannot rely solely on the memorization of rules; instead, it requires continuous practice and application in authentic language-use contexts.

To address these challenges, spelling instruction at the MI/SD level should be conducted in a contextual manner and integrated with other language skills. Teachers should not teach spelling merely through rote learning of rules but should connect it to meaningful reading and writing activities. For example, when students write personal narratives or stories, teachers can simultaneously guide them in the correct use of capital letters, punctuation, and word formation according to standard spelling conventions. Through this approach, students gain not only theoretical knowledge but also practical experience in applying spelling rules in everyday written communication.

One effective approach to spelling instruction is the process writing approach. This approach views writing as a process consisting of several stages: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing. During the editing stage, teachers can provide focused guidance on correct spelling usage. By revising their own writing and reviewing the work of their peers, students learn to identify and correct spelling errors independently. This process not only improves writing skills but also fosters greater language awareness and responsibility in written communication.

The role of the teacher is central to the success of spelling instruction. Teachers must serve as role models in the correct use of Indonesian, both in spoken and written communication. All written materials presented by teachers—including classroom board work, textbooks, worksheets, and instructional media—should consistently follow standard spelling conventions. Such modeling is particularly important because elementary school students tend to learn through observation and imitation of their immediate environment.

In addition, the use of creative and innovative instructional media can significantly enhance the effectiveness of spelling instruction. Teachers may employ word games, spelling cards, interactive quizzes, digital learning applications, and projects such as creating mini dictionaries. These learning tools help create an enjoyable learning atmosphere, motivating students to learn and apply spelling rules more actively. Learning experiences that encourage active student participation have been shown to be more effective in helping learners understand linguistic concepts than teacher-centered lecture-based instruction.

In conclusion, spelling is a crucial component of Indonesian language learning because it provides guidelines for accurate and effective written communication.

Mastery of spelling enables students to produce writing that is clear, communicative, and consistent with standard Indonesian language conventions. Therefore, spelling instruction at the MI/SD level should be contextual, integrated, and practice-oriented so that students not only understand spelling rules but are also able to apply them effectively in various forms of written communication.

Morphology and Its Implementation in Indonesian Language Learning at the MI/SD Level

Morphology is a branch of linguistics that studies the internal structure of words and the processes through which words are formed in a language. The primary focus of morphological study is the morpheme, the smallest linguistic unit that carries meaning or grammatical function. In Indonesian, morphemes are classified into two categories: free morphemes and bound morphemes. Free morphemes can stand alone as independent words, such as *makan* (eat), *jalan* (walk/road), *buku* (book), and *besar* (big). In contrast, bound morphemes cannot stand independently and must be attached to other morphemes, such as prefixes (*me-*, *ber-*, *pe-*), suffixes (*-kan*, *-an*), and other affix combinations. Through the study of morphology, learners can understand how words are formed, how meanings change through word formation processes, and how grammatical functions are expressed within sentences (Chaer, 2021).

Indonesian is recognized as a language with a rich and productive morphological system. Word formation in Indonesian occurs through several morphological processes, including affixation, reduplication, compounding, and acronym formation. Affixation involves the addition of affixes to root words in the form of prefixes, suffixes, infixes, or circumfixes. Reduplication refers to the repetition of all or part of a base word, often expressing plurality or other semantic functions. Compounding is the process of combining two or more words into a single meaningful unit, while acronym formation creates new words from the initial letters or syllables of a phrase. These processes demonstrate how Indonesian vocabulary continues to expand through systematic and productive word-formation mechanisms.

From the perspective of vocabulary development, mastery of morphology enables students to expand their vocabulary more efficiently and independently. When learners understand that a single root word can generate multiple derived forms, they can more easily identify relationships among words and infer meanings. For example, the root word *ajar* (teach) can produce various derived forms such as *belajar* (to study), *pelajar* (student), *pengajar* (teacher), *pembelajaran* (learning), and *mengajarkan* (to teach). Understanding these relationships not only enriches students' vocabulary but also enhances their reading comprehension and their ability to express ideas accurately in both spoken and written communication.

Morphological knowledge also contributes significantly to writing proficiency. In writing activities, students must be able to select appropriate word forms according to the context of a sentence. Incorrect use of affixes may alter meaning or result in grammatically inappropriate sentences. For instance, the words *makan* (eat), *memakan* (to eat something), *dimakan* (eaten), and *makanan* (food) originate from the same root but perform different grammatical functions.

Therefore, a solid understanding of morphology helps students construct effective, coherent, and meaningful sentences, improving both the accuracy and quality of their written communication.

In Indonesian language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels, morphology should be taught through approaches that correspond to the developmental characteristics of young learners. One highly recommended method is the inductive approach, in which students are first exposed to concrete examples before being guided to discover patterns and rules independently. Through this process, learners do not merely memorize grammatical rules but actively construct their understanding based on observation and analysis. For example, a teacher may present several words beginning with the prefix *me-*, such as *menulis* (to write), *membaca* (to read), *menggambar* (to draw), and *melukis* (to paint), and then encourage students to identify the common function of the prefix in forming meaning.

To make learning more engaging, teachers can incorporate morphology-based language games into classroom activities. Tasks such as assembling morpheme pieces to form correct words, generating as many derived words as possible from a single root word, or identifying affixes in reading passages can help students understand morphological concepts in an enjoyable manner. Through such activities, students become actively involved in the learning process rather than passively receiving information. Active participation has been shown to enhance conceptual understanding while simultaneously increasing learners' motivation and enthusiasm for learning.

Another effective strategy is integrating morphology instruction with reading activities. When students read stories, informational texts, or simple articles, teachers can guide them to identify affixed words within the text. Students can then analyze the root words, determine the types of affixes used, and examine how meanings change as a result of affixation. This activity not only strengthens morphological awareness but also improves reading comprehension and vocabulary acquisition. As a result, morphology learning becomes more contextualized and closely connected to authentic language use.

The advancement of digital technology has also created new opportunities for morphology instruction at the MI/SD level. Educational applications based on gamification, animated instructional videos, interactive quizzes, and digital worksheets can be utilized to help students understand word-formation processes in a more engaging and visual manner. The integration of technology aligns with the demands of twenty-first-century education and the implementation of the Merdeka Curriculum, which encourages the use of innovative learning resources. Through digital media, morphological concepts that might otherwise appear abstract can be presented in concrete and accessible ways that facilitate student understanding.

In conclusion, morphology is one of the most important linguistic components in Indonesian language learning at the MI and SD levels. A strong understanding of word structure and word-formation processes helps students expand their vocabulary, improve reading comprehension, enhance writing skills, and use language more accurately and effectively. Therefore, morphology instruction should be designed to be contextual, engaging, and integrated with other language skills in

order to provide meaningful learning experiences and support the optimal development of students' literacy competencies.

Syntax and Its Implementation in Indonesian Language Learning at the MI/SD Level

Syntax is a branch of linguistics that studies the arrangement of words in forming phrases, clauses, and sentences that are both grammatical and meaningful. It focuses on the relationships among words and linguistic elements within larger structures to create effective communication. In the Indonesian language, syntax encompasses several grammatical units, namely words, phrases, clauses, and sentences. A word is the smallest unit in syntax, while a phrase is a combination of two or more words that does not contain a predicate. A clause is a grammatical unit consisting of at least a subject and a predicate, whereas a sentence is the most complete linguistic unit because it expresses a complete idea or thought. Understanding these syntactic units is essential for Indonesian language learning, particularly at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels, as they form the foundation for students' language competence (Ramlan, 2021).

In Indonesian, several basic sentence patterns must be mastered by students, including Subject-Predicate (S-P), Subject-Predicate-Object (S-P-O), Subject-Predicate-Complement (S-P-C), and Subject-Predicate-Adverbial (S-P-A) structures. Mastery of these fundamental patterns is important because they provide the framework for constructing correct and effective sentences. In addition, students need to understand different types of sentences, such as simple and compound sentences based on the number of clauses, as well as declarative, interrogative, imperative, and exclamatory sentences based on their communicative functions. Knowledge of sentence patterns and sentence types enables students to communicate more effectively in both spoken and written forms and to adapt their language use to different contexts.

Syntactic competence plays a significant role in the development of students' language skills. In writing activities, syntax helps students organize ideas into coherent, clear, and understandable sentences. In speaking activities, knowledge of sentence structure enables learners to express their thoughts systematically so that their messages can be communicated effectively. Furthermore, in reading and listening activities, understanding sentence structure helps students identify relationships among ideas and comprehend information more accurately. Therefore, syntax is one of the most influential linguistic components in achieving overall success in Indonesian language learning (Alwi et al., 2021).

Despite its importance, teaching syntax at the MI/SD level presents several challenges. One of the primary difficulties is the abstract nature of syntactic concepts such as subject, predicate, object, clause, and sentence structure. Elementary school students are generally in the concrete operational stage of cognitive development and often find it difficult to understand abstract grammatical concepts without sufficient examples and visual support. In addition, the influence of regional languages and local dialects may affect students' sentence construction patterns, resulting in grammatical inaccuracies when they use standard Indonesian. These challenges require teachers to design instructional activities that make syntactic

concepts more concrete, meaningful, and accessible to young learners.

To address these challenges, teachers should adopt contextual and student-centered approaches to syntax instruction. Learning activities should begin with sentences drawn from students' everyday experiences, such as classroom conversations, stories they read, or personal experiences they have encountered. Teachers can guide students in identifying sentence components from authentic examples before introducing formal grammatical terminology. This approach helps learners understand syntactic concepts more easily because they are connected to familiar and meaningful language use. Contextual learning also encourages students to recognize the practical relevance of syntax in their daily communication (Chaer, 2021).

In addition to contextual approaches, teachers can utilize visual media and interactive activities to enhance students' understanding of sentence structure. Word cards, sentence diagrams, structural charts, sentence-building games, and activities that require students to expand sentences into paragraphs can help make syntactic relationships more visible and concrete. Integrating syntax instruction with reading and writing activities also enables students to apply grammatical concepts in authentic language situations. Consequently, syntax learning at the MI/SD level not only helps students understand grammatical rules but also contributes to the development of their literacy skills, communication abilities, and overall language proficiency.

Challenges and Solutions in Indonesian Language Learning at the MI/SD Level

Indonesian language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels, particularly in the areas of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax, continues to face various challenges that affect the effectiveness of the learning process. One of the primary challenges is the limited linguistic competence of some teachers. Not all teachers have an academic background in Indonesian language education, resulting in varying levels of understanding of fundamental linguistic concepts. Consequently, instruction often emphasizes memorization of language rules rather than the development of deep conceptual understanding. To address this issue, continuous professional development programs are needed through training sessions, workshops, and learning communities that focus on strengthening teachers' linguistic and pedagogical competencies. Such initiatives can enhance teachers' ability to manage Indonesian language instruction in a more effective, innovative, and student-centered manner (Suryaman, 2023).

Another significant challenge concerns the availability of quality teaching materials and learning resources. In many regions, particularly in remote and underdeveloped areas, access to textbooks, instructional media, and digital learning resources remains limited. Furthermore, some existing teaching materials are not fully aligned with students' developmental characteristics or with evidence-based principles of effective language instruction. Therefore, there is a need to develop contextualized, engaging, and accessible learning materials in both print and digital formats. The integration of information and communication technology can also serve as an alternative means of expanding students' access to diverse learning

resources that support language development and literacy growth.

The linguistic diversity of students presents an additional challenge in Indonesian language education. Many learners use regional languages as their first language in daily communication, while Indonesian functions as their second language. Differences in sound systems, vocabulary, and sentence structures between local languages and Indonesian often lead to language interference that affects students' language performance. To overcome this challenge, teachers should adopt inclusive instructional approaches that respect students' linguistic backgrounds and utilize local languages as bridges to mastering standard Indonesian. Such an approach allows students to develop proficiency in Indonesian without disregarding their linguistic and cultural identities (Chaer, 2021).

Beyond linguistic factors, low student motivation toward language-related subjects also constitutes a significant obstacle. Many students perceive topics such as phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax as difficult, abstract, and uninteresting. Consequently, teachers need to design learning experiences that are creative, interactive, and enjoyable through language games, visual media, digital technologies, literacy projects, and collaborative activities that actively engage students. Learning activities connected to students' real-life experiences can help them recognize the practical value of mastering Indonesian language skills, thereby increasing their motivation and participation in the learning process.

Another challenge is the limited collaboration between schools and families in supporting students' language development. In fact, the family environment plays a crucial role in fostering reading, writing, and communication habits from an early age. Therefore, schools should establish strong partnerships with parents through family literacy programs, home-based learning support initiatives, and regular communication regarding students' language development. Through effective collaboration among schools, families, and communities, many of the challenges associated with Indonesian language learning can be addressed more successfully. Such synergy can contribute to the achievement of educational goals aimed at developing students who are literate, communicative, and capable of critical thinking in various contexts.

CONCLUSION

Phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax are four fundamental linguistic components that serve as the primary foundation of Indonesian language learning at the Madrasah Ibtidaiyah (MI) and Elementary School (SD) levels. These aspects are closely interconnected and play a significant role in supporting the development of students' language skills, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Mastery of phonology enables students to understand the sound system of the language, while proficiency in spelling supports accuracy in written communication. Morphological knowledge enriches vocabulary and enhances word comprehension, whereas syntactic competence allows students to construct effective and meaningful sentences. Therefore, these four linguistic components should be taught in an integrated manner as part of efforts to strengthen students' literacy development.

The effectiveness of phonology, spelling, morphology, and syntax instruction largely depends on the implementation of appropriate teaching strategies. Language learning should be conducted through integrated, contextual, and student-centered

approaches that allow learners to understand linguistic concepts through meaningful and authentic experiences. In addition, teachers should utilize a variety of innovative methods, instructional media, and educational technologies to ensure that linguistic concepts are perceived not as abstract and difficult subjects, but as practical skills that are useful in everyday life. Instruction that takes into account students' developmental characteristics and diverse linguistic backgrounds is also essential for enhancing learning outcomes.

Teachers at the MI/SD level play a crucial role in determining the quality of Indonesian language instruction. Consequently, continuous efforts to improve teachers' linguistic and pedagogical competencies are necessary through sustainable professional development programs. Teachers are expected not only to possess a solid theoretical understanding of linguistic concepts but also to be capable of translating that knowledge into creative, engaging, and learner-centered classroom practices. Support from schools, government institutions, and other educational stakeholders is equally important in creating a conducive and high-quality learning environment.

Furthermore, continued research and scholarly studies on various instructional strategies and learning models for Indonesian language education at the MI/SD level are needed to strengthen the empirical foundation of effective teaching practices. Collaboration among academics, researchers, teachers, curriculum developers, and educational policymakers is essential for generating innovative approaches that respond to students' needs and contemporary educational demands. Through such collaborative efforts, the quality of Indonesian language learning at the elementary level is expected to improve continuously, ultimately fostering a generation of learners with strong literacy skills, positive character, and the ability to communicate effectively in a wide range of social and academic contexts.

REFERENCES

- Alwi, H., & Sugono, D. (2021). *Tata Bahasa Baku Bahasa Indonesia dalam Perspektif Pembelajaran*. Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra, 21(1), 12–28. <https://doi.org/10.17509/bs.jpbsp.v21i1.32892>
- Chaer, A. (2021). *Sintaksis Bahasa Indonesia: Pendekatan Proses*. Jurnal Bahasa dan Pembelajaran Bahasa, 9(2), 88–105. <https://doi.org/10.24036/jbpb.v9i2.114021>
- Kridalaksana, H. (2020). *Morfologi Bahasa Indonesia: Kajian Teoritis dan Aplikatif*. Jurnal Linguistik Indonesia, 38(2), 101–118. <https://doi.org/10.26499/li.v38i2.180>
- Kurniawan, H., & Dewi, R. (2021). *Strategi Pembelajaran Sintaksis yang Inovatif di Tingkat Sekolah Dasar*. Jurnal PGSD: Jurnal Ilmiah Pendidikan Guru Sekolah Dasar, 14(2), 189–204. <https://doi.org/10.17509/pgsd.v14i2.32156>
- Muslich, M. (2020). *Fonologi Bahasa Indonesia: Tinjauan Deskriptif Sistem Bunyi Bahasa Indonesia*. Jurnal Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, 7(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.21831/jbsi.v7i1.32011>

- Nasution, H., & Lubis, R. (2021). *Analisis Sintaksis Kalimat dalam Buku Teks Bahasa Indonesia SD Kurikulum 2013*. Jurnal Edukasi Kultura, 8(1), 55–70. <https://doi.org/10.24114/kultura.v8i1.24312>
- Oktavia, Y., & Ramadhan, S. (2022). *Integrasi Pembelajaran Fonologi dan Morfologi dalam Meningkatkan Literasi Awal Siswa SD*. Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia Undiksha, 12(2), 222–238. <https://doi.org/10.23887/jipbs.v12i2.48921>
- Purnama, D. I., & Anggraeni, L. (2021). *Peran Guru dalam Mengatasi Kesalahan Ejaan dan Tanda Baca Siswa MI/SD*. Jurnal Pendidikan Guru Madrasah Ibtidaiyah, 4(2), 101–116. <https://doi.org/10.30829/jpgmi.v4i2.9823>
- Putri, A. R., & Wulandari, S. (2022). *Penguasaan Morfologi dan Dampaknya terhadap Keterampilan Menulis Siswa Kelas IV SD*. Jurnal Basicedu, 6(3), 3412–3425. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i3.2801>
- Rahmawati, F., & Hidayat, N. (2021). *Kesalahan Ejaan dalam Tulisan Siswa SD: Analisis dan Implikasinya bagi Pembelajaran*. Jurnal Pendidikan Bahasa dan Sastra Indonesia, 10(2), 77–93. <https://doi.org/10.15294/jpbsi.v10i2.41203>
- Santoso, A., & Widjajanti, K. (2021). *Kesulitan Siswa MI/SD dalam Memahami Struktur Kalimat Bahasa Indonesia dan Solusinya*. Jurnal Pendidikan: Teori, Penelitian, dan Pengembangan, 6(8), 1234–1248. <https://doi.org/10.17977/jptpp.v6i8.14982>
- Suryani, N., & Fatimah, S. (2022). *Penerapan Metode Induktif dalam Pembelajaran Morfologi Bahasa Indonesia di SD/MI*. Jurnal Ibtida'i: Jurnal Kependidikan Dasar Islam, 9(1), 66–82. <https://doi.org/10.32678/ibtidai.v9i1.5672>
- Suyanto, E., & Prasetyo, D. (2022). *Implementasi Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia Berbasis Konteks di Sekolah Dasar*. Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar, 13(1), 45–62. <https://doi.org/10.21009/JPD.0131.05>
- Wahyuni, S., & Setiawan, B. (2022). *Pendekatan Kontekstual dalam Pembelajaran Fonologi di Madrasah Ibtidaiyah*. Jurnal Al-Bidayah: Jurnal Pendidikan Dasar Islam, 14(1), 33–50. <https://doi.org/10.14421/albidayah.v14i1.836>
- Zulkifli, A., & Hasanah, M. (2022). *Kurikulum Merdeka dan Implikasinya terhadap Pembelajaran Bahasa Indonesia di SD/MI*. Jurnal Basicedu, 6(5), 8901–8915. <https://doi.org/10.31004/basicedu.v6i5.3921>