



## Effectiveness of the SAS (Structural-Analytic-Synthetic) Method in Improving Beginning Reading Skills of Elementary School Students

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Keywords:	Abstract
Early Reading	<p><b>Background:</b> This study aimed to analyze the effectiveness of the SAS method in improving beginning reading skills of elementary school students. The study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method with a descriptive-narrative approach.</p> <p><b>Method:</b> Data sources were obtained from scientific articles published between 2020–2026 indexed in Google Scholar and Scopus through the Publish or Perish application. The article selection process followed the PRISMA guidelines, including identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion stages.</p> <p><b>Result:</b> The findings showed that the SAS method effectively improved students' ability to recognize letters, read syllables, words, and simple sentences gradually and meaningfully. The method also enhanced reading fluency, pronunciation, intonation, reading comprehension, learning motivation, and students' self-confidence during the learning process. In addition, the effectiveness of the SAS method was supported by the use of various learning media such as letter cards, picture books, Pop-Up Books, PowerPoint, and digital teaching materials. Teachers also played an important role in guiding, motivating, and creating engaging learning environments.</p> <p><b>Implication:</b> Therefore, the SAS method can be used as an effective alternative learning strategy to support the development of basic literacy skills in elementary school students.</p>
Primary School	
Basic Literacy	
Systematic Literature Review	

### INTRODUCTION

Beginning reading ability is a very important basic skill in elementary education because it serves as the foundation for students to understand lessons and acquire knowledge. Reading is not merely recognizing letters and pronouncing words, but also understanding the content of texts so that students are able to think more critically and systematically (Muammar, 2018; Octorina et al., 2023). Therefore, beginning reading instruction needs to be provided gradually, purposefully, and in accordance with students' development.

Beginning reading is the initial stage in which students recognize letters, sounds, syllables, words, and then read simple sentences properly. At this stage, students need intensive guidance because reading ability must be practiced continuously through an

appropriate learning process (Yanuarsi et al., 2020). However, students' reading literacy ability in Indonesia remains relatively low. The 2022 PISA results show that Indonesian students' reading ability is still below the international average, causing many students to have difficulty understanding texts properly (PISA, 2022).

One important factor in the success of reading instruction is the use of an appropriate method. In basic education, the success of the learning process in elementary schools is the result of the interaction of various factors, such as teacher quality, an appropriate curriculum, effective learning methods, and a supportive learning environment (Hanuzza et al., 2026). In beginning reading, there are several learning methods, one of which is the Structural Analytic Synthetic (SAS) method. The SAS method is a reading method that begins with a complete sentence, which is then broken down into words, syllables, and letters, and then reconstructed into its original form so that students can more easily understand the relationship between language and meaning (Kurniaman & Noviana, 2016). This method has structural, analytic, and synthetic stages that help students learn to read systematically and gradually (Krissandi et al., 2008).

The advantage of the SAS method lies in learning that is more meaningful and closer to students' daily lives. Students learn to understand language through simple sentences before recognizing the parts of language in more detail. In this way, the process of learning to read becomes easier for students to understand and less confusing. In addition to improving reading ability, the SAS method can also increase students' enthusiasm and engagement in learning (Sumahi et al., 2021).

Several studies show that the SAS method is effective in improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. This method has been proven to help students read letters, words, and sentences more fluently and to improve students' reading comprehension (Aminah & Yuliawati, 2018; Tiana Permana & Samsudin, 2023). In addition, the current development of the SAS method has begun to be combined with digital media and interactive teaching materials so that learning becomes more interesting and suited to the needs of today's students (Septyani et al., 2024).

Although various studies have demonstrated the effectiveness of the SAS method in improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability, these studies have generally been conducted separately across different contexts, locations, student characteristics, and learning media. Most studies focus on measuring improvements in learning outcomes in one school or one specific group of students, so the resulting findings remain partial and have not provided a complete picture of the overall effectiveness of the SAS method. In addition, the development of SAS method implementation, which is now combined with various innovative learning media, has not been comprehensively analyzed in a single integrated study. This condition indicates a research gap, namely the absence of a literature synthesis that systematically summarizes, compares, and evaluates recent research findings on the effectiveness of the SAS method in beginning reading instruction in elementary schools.

Based on this gap, this Systematic Literature Review (SLR) study is important for integrating various published empirical findings so that a more comprehensive understanding can be obtained regarding the effectiveness of the SAS method, the factors that influence its success, and its forms of implementation in various learning contexts. Through a systematic synthesis of research findings, this study can provide stronger evidence of the contribution of the SAS method to improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability and basic literacy.

The novelty of this study lies in its effort to present a comprehensive synthesis of recent research findings on the SAS method from 2020 to 2026 using a Systematic Literature

Review (SLR) approach and PRISMA procedures. Unlike previous studies, which generally examined the effectiveness of the SAS method in only one location or one specific group of students, this study identifies patterns of findings, benefits, supporting factors, implementation constraints, and various learning media used in the application of the SAS method. Thus, this study not only provides conclusions about the effectiveness of the SAS method, but also offers a broader knowledge mapping as a basis for developing effective beginning reading instructional strategies for elementary school students.

Based on the description above, the SAS method can be an effective learning alternative for improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. Through gradual and meaningful learning, the SAS method is expected to help students develop basic literacy skills more optimally.

## **METHOD**

This study used a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method with a descriptive-narrative model to identify, evaluate, and synthesize previous research findings related to the effectiveness of the Structural Analytic Synthetic (SAS) method in improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. A Systematic Literature Review is a method used to identify and analyze all studies relevant to a particular research question (Keele & Kitchenham, 2007).

In line with this focus, this study examines students' ability to read letters, syllables, and simple words after using the SAS method at the elementary school level. The data used were secondary data obtained from scientific articles and books relevant to the research topic. The literature search process was carried out with the help of the Publish or Perish application to trace journal publications from 2020 to 2026 obtained from the Google Scholar and Scopus databases. Data collection in this study used the documentation method by collecting various written sources related to the SAS method and beginning reading. Documentation was used to strengthen the systematic analysis of literature discussing the application of the SAS method in reading instruction in elementary schools. Data sources were obtained from reputable articles indexed in Sinta and Scopus, particularly studies discussing the use of the SAS method to improve elementary school students' beginning reading ability.

The research process was conducted using the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) guidelines so that the literature review would be systematic and transparent (Moher et al., 2009). The research stages consisted of four stages: identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Page et al., 2021). The data search strategy was carried out using the Publish or Perish application with keywords such as Structural Analytic Synthetic, Beginning Reading, Early Reading, Analytic-Synthetic Method, and Primary School through the Google Scholar, Sinta, and Scopus databases. The number of articles at each selection stage was calculated consistently based on the PRISMA guidelines, so the number of remaining articles at each stage was the result of subtracting the articles excluded according to the predetermined exclusion criteria from the number of articles at the previous stage. The following systematic review process in this study follows the PRISMA guidelines.

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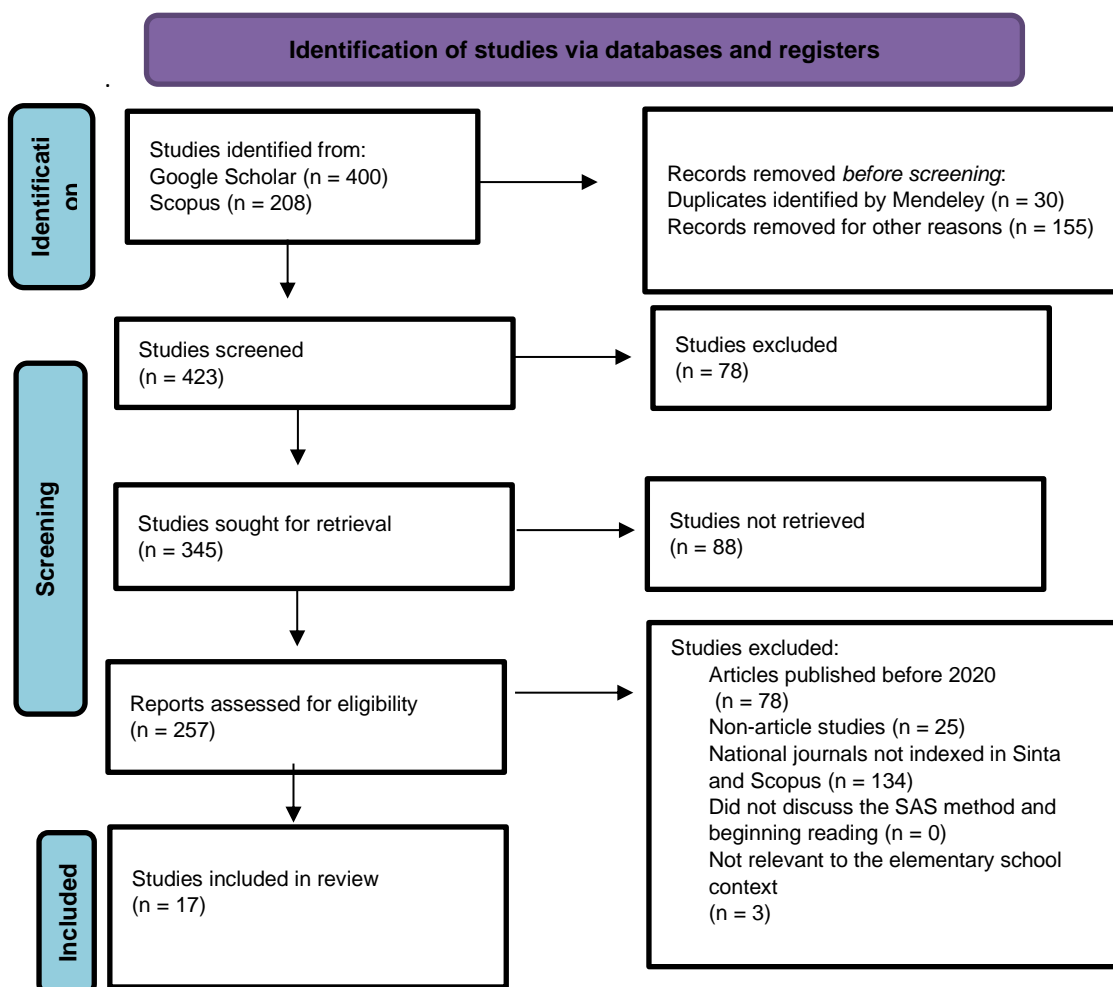


Figure 1. PRISMA Diagram

## RESULTS

The articles obtained were then selected using the PICOS (Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome, Study Type) approach (Methley et al., 2014). The literature selection process was carried out using inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure that the articles analyzed were truly relevant to the research focus.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Articles published between 2020 and 2025.	Articles published before 2020.
Article-type studies	Non-article studies
National journals indexed in Sinta 1-4 and Scopus.	National journals not indexed in Sinta 1-4 and Scopus.
Research findings on the SAS method and beginning reading.	Does not discuss the SAS method and beginning reading.
Focused on the elementary school level.	Not relevant to the elementary school context.

Data were analyzed using a qualitative narrative review approach through the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. Data reduction was carried out by selecting and focusing on relevant data, after which the data were presented narratively to identify the relationship between the SAS method and beginning reading. The final stage involved drawing conclusions based on the analysis results that had been verified with supporting literature so that the research findings had good validity and credibility. Based on the literature selection process using PRISMA guidelines, 17 articles met the inclusion criteria and were analyzed further. The characteristics of the articles that passed selection are presented in Table 2.

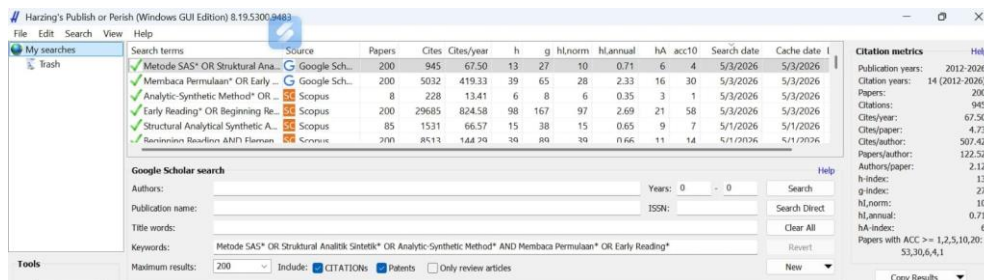
**Table 2.** Selected articles

No	Authors & Year	Research Focus	Research Design/ Method	Subjects/ Context	Intervention /Media Used	Main Findings
1	Afrianti et al. (2025)	Improving beginning reading skills through the SAS method	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade II elementary school students	SAS method assisted by picture media	The picture-assisted SAS method helped students recognize words more easily, read simple sentences, and increase learning engagement.
2	Apriani et al. (2023)	Effect of the SAS method on beginning reading skills	Quantitative	Grade I MI/elementary school students	Metode SAS	The SAS method had a positive effect on beginning reading ability, especially in recognizing letters, syllables, and words.
3	Daud et al. (2025)	Improving beginning reading ability through SAS	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade II elementary school students	SAS method assisted by Pop-Up Book media	Pop-Up Book media made reading instruction more interesting and helped students understand texts gradually.
4	Fikriana et al. (2024)	Development of SAS-based reading learning media	Research and Development (R&D)	Elementary school students	SAS-based picture storybook	The SAS-based picture storybook was suitable for increasing students' interest and beginning reading ability.
5	Helwah et al. (2023)	The SAS method as a teacher solution for improving reading ability	Descriptive qualitative	Beginning class of Madrasah Ibtidaiyah	Application of the SAS method in reading instruction	Teachers played an important role in guiding students through the structural, analytic, and synthetic stages systematically.
6	Jabir (2020)	Application of the SAS method in improving early reading ability	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Elementary school students	Metode SAS	The application of SAS improved students' ability to read words and simple sentences through language analysis and synthesis processes.
7	Juliani et al. (2026)	Efforts to improve beginning reading skills	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade II elementary school students	Metode SAS	Students' beginning reading ability improved after instruction was conducted through the stages of sentence, word, syllable, letter, and then back to sentence.

No	Authors & Year	Research Focus	Research Design/ Method	Subjects/ Context	Intervention /Media Used	Main Findings
8	Muhibah et al. (2020)	Improving beginning reading ability in Indonesian language subjects	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Elementary school students	Metode SAS	The SAS method helped students understand the relationship between sounds, letters, syllables, and words in Indonesian language learning.
9	Naki (2024)	Application of the SAS method to improve reading ability	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade II elementary school students	Metode SAS	Learning with the SAS method improved reading fluency and students' self-confidence during the learning process.
10	Agustin et al. (2024)	Improving beginning reading with the SAS method	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade I elementary school students	SAS method assisted by letter cards	Letter cards supported the SAS stages, making it easier for students to recognize letters, read syllables, and form words.
11	Octorina et al. (2023)	Development of Big Book media using the SAS method	Research and Development (R&D)	Grade I elementary school students	SAS-based Big Book media	SAS-based Big Book media was considered feasible and effective for improving students' beginning reading ability.
12	Pradnyana et al. (2025)	Improving beginning reading skills	Classroom Action Research (CAR)	Grade I elementary school students	SAS method assisted by letter cards	The letter-card-assisted SAS method improved students' ability to recognize letters, read syllables, and read simple words.
13	Purnamasari et al. (2025)	Effect of the SAS method on beginning reading ability	Quantitative	Grade I elementary school learners	SAS method assisted by Education Card media	The Education Card-assisted SAS method influenced the improvement of students' beginning reading ability.
14	Salsabilla et al. (2024)	Effect of applying the SAS method on beginning reading	Quantitative	Grade II elementary school students	SAS method assisted by PowerPoint	PowerPoint supported the visualization of SAS stages so that students became more active and beginning reading ability improved.
15	Septyani et al. (2024)	Development of SAS-based digital teaching materials	Research and Development (R&D)	Elementary school students	SAS-based digital teaching materials	SAS-based digital teaching materials helped make reading instruction more interactive, interesting, and aligned with the needs of today's students.
16	Soya & Purnamasari (2025)	Beginning reading ability using the SAS method	Descriptive qualitative	Grade I elementary school students	Metode SAS	The SAS method helped students understand reading gradually, from complete sentences to smaller language units, and then reconstruct them.
17	Permana & Samsudin (2023)	Use of the SAS method to improve early reading capacity	Literature review	Grade I elementary school students	Metode SAS	The review showed that the SAS method can serve as an alternative for early reading instruction because it helps students read systematically and meaningfully.

## DISCUSSION

Based on the literature selection results using PRISMA guidelines, the literature search conducted using Publish or Perish in the Scopus and Google Scholar databases produced a total of 608 articles, consisting of 400 articles from Google Scholar and 208 articles from Scopus. This number indicates that the topic studied has a fairly broad research scope. Next, the articles were selected in stages based on the suitability of the title, abstract, and research focus with the predetermined inclusion criteria. After the screening process, 17 articles were considered relevant to the application of the SAS (Structural Analytic Synthetic) method in improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. The following are the literature search results obtained through the Publish or Perish application:



**Figure 2.** Article Search Based on Keywords Using Publish or Perish Software

Of the 17 articles analyzed, 8 were classroom action research (CAR), 3 were quantitative studies, 3 were research and development (R&D) studies, 2 were descriptive qualitative studies, and 1 was a literature review. The diversity of research types indicates that the SAS method has been widely examined in various beginning reading learning contexts. The research focus was not only directed at improving students' reading ability, but also at developing learning media and examining the process of applying the SAS method in the classroom. The analysis shows that the SAS method is most often applied in Indonesian language learning in the lower grades of elementary school, particularly to improve beginning reading ability. This method is used to help students recognize letters, read syllables, read words, and understand simple sentences gradually.

## Forms of the Teacher's Role in Applying the SAS Method to Beginning Reading Instruction in Elementary Schools

Teachers have a very important role in applying the Structural Analytic Synthetic (SAS) method to beginning reading instruction in elementary schools. In the SAS method, teachers not only deliver material, but also guide students through the stages of reading gradually, starting from recognizing complete sentences, breaking them down into words, syllables, and letters, and then reconstructing them into meaningful sentences. Through this guidance, students can understand the reading process more easily and in a more directed way according to their ability development (Juliani et al., 2026; Purnamasari et al., 2025; Soya & Purnamasari, 2025).

In addition to serving as guides, teachers also act as learning designers who adapt the SAS method to the characteristics of elementary school students. Teachers use various learning media, such as letter cards, pictures, leveled books, Pop-Up Books, picture storybooks, and digital teaching materials, so that reading instruction becomes more engaging, concrete, and easy for students to understand (Afrianti et al., 2025; Daud et al., 2025; Fikriana et al., 2024; Wulan Sari & Sismulyasih SB, 2025). The use of these media helps students become more active and less easily bored while learning to read.

Teachers also serve as models in reading. At the beginning reading stage, students still need direct examples of letter pronunciation, reading syllables and words, and intonation in simple sentences (Noni Agustin, Yantoro, 2024). Therefore, the teacher reads first, and then students imitate the reading gradually so that their reading ability can develop better (Apriani et al., 2023; Salsabilla et al., 2024).

In addition, teachers act as motivators and evaluators during the learning process. Teachers provide students with opportunities to read in front of the class, answer questions, and arrange words independently, thereby increasing students' courage and self-confidence (Helwah et al., 2023; Naki, 2024). Evaluation is also carried out to determine the development of students' reading ability and to improve learning processes that are still less than optimal.

Thus, the success of applying the SAS method in beginning reading is strongly influenced by the teacher's role in guiding students, managing learning, providing motivation, and creating a learning atmosphere that is engaging and appropriate to the needs of elementary school students.

### **Effectiveness of the SAS Method in Beginning Reading Instruction for Elementary School Students**

The Structural Analytic Synthetic (SAS) method is one beginning reading instructional method that is considered effective in helping elementary school students understand the reading process gradually and meaningfully. In this method, learning does not begin with the recognition of isolated letters, but with complete sentences that are close to students' experiences. These sentences are then broken down into words, syllables, and letters, and then reconstructed into complete sentences. These stages help students understand that language elements are interrelated in forming meaning (Juliani et al., 2026; Naki, 2024; Soya & Purnamasari, 2025). Thus, students do not only learn to recognize letter symbols, but also understand the reading process more comprehensively.

In its application, the SAS method is often combined with various learning media to support students' understanding. Several studies show the use of media such as letter cards, picture media, Pop-Up Books, leveled books, PowerPoint, digital teaching materials, and picture storybooks in beginning reading instruction (Afrianti et al., 2025; Daud et al., 2025; Purnamasari et al., 2025). The use of these media makes the learning process more concrete, interesting, and suited to the characteristics of elementary school students, who still need visual and contextual learning. The presence of media also helps students become more active during the learning process.

The pattern of SAS method implementation across various studies shows relatively similar steps, namely students are first introduced to complete sentences and then guided to recognize words, syllables, and letters before reconstructing them into meaningful sentences (Jabir, 2020; Muhibah et al., 2020). This process helps students understand texts systematically because reading ability is built from simple stages toward more complex reading skills. Through this process, students find it easier to understand the relationship between sounds, written forms, and the meaning of texts.

The effectiveness of the SAS method is evident in the development of students' beginning reading ability, such as the ability to recognize letters, read syllables, read words, read simple sentences, and connect sounds with written forms (Juliani et al., 2026; Pradnyana et al., 2025; Purnamasari et al., 2025). In addition, the SAS method also helps improve pronunciation, intonation, reading fluency, and simple reading comprehension, so students are not only able to read technically but also understand the content of texts better (Daud et al., 2025; Mera et al., 2023; Salsabilla et al., 2024).

Based on these analysis results, the SAS method can be understood as an effective learning method for improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. This effectiveness is evident not only from improvements in students' reading ability, but also from students' more active and confident engagement during the learning process. The success of the SAS method becomes more optimal when teachers are able to present engaging learning, use appropriate media, and provide consistent guidance throughout the reading process.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) of 17 relevant research articles, it can be concluded that the Structural Analytic Synthetic (SAS) method is effective in improving elementary school students' beginning reading ability. The SAS method helps students understand the reading process gradually, starting from the recognition of complete sentences, then analyzing them into words, syllables, and letters, and reconstructing them into meaningful sentences. This process makes it easier for students to understand the relationship among language symbols, sounds, and text meaning systematically.

The research findings show that the application of the SAS method can improve students' ability to recognize letters, read syllables, read words, read simple sentences, and improve reading fluency, pronunciation, intonation, and comprehension. In addition, the SAS method also has a positive impact on students' activeness, learning motivation, and self-confidence during the learning process. The effectiveness of the SAS method becomes more optimal when combined with interesting learning media such as letter cards, pictures, picture storybooks, Pop-Up Books, PowerPoint, and digital teaching materials that match the characteristics of elementary school students.

The successful application of the SAS method is also strongly influenced by the teacher's role in guiding students, modeling reading, managing learning, and creating an active and enjoyable learning atmosphere. Thus, the SAS method can be an effective learning alternative to support the development of basic literacy and the improvement of elementary school students' beginning reading ability more optimally.

Based on the findings of this study, elementary school teachers are advised to apply the SAS method consistently in beginning reading instruction because this method has been proven effective in improving students' basic literacy skills. Teachers also need to use creative and innovative learning media so that the process of learning to read becomes more interesting and in line with students' development. In addition, schools are expected to support the provision of adequate reading learning facilities, including digital media and interactive teaching materials. Future researchers are advised to develop experimental studies or SAS-based media development studies that are more innovative so that a more effective beginning reading learning model can be obtained and aligned with the needs of 21st-century learning.

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