

Description of Early Literacy Skills in Children with Special Needs in Kindergarten

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Abstract— Initial literacy ability is one of the abilities that become the obligation to begin to teach to early childhood. This program is very important as a trigger in predicting children's abilities in the future. Even recently, there are many children who do not have an interest in early literacy, besides teachers and parents at home must pay more attention to children's literacy skills. This study aims to increase the ability of early literacy in children with special needs in kindergarten. More specifically, this study describes (1) the conditions and characteristics of children with special needs, (2) initial literacy competencies, and (3) giving treatment to improve school readiness. The subjects of this study were 8 children with special needs from inclusion kindergarten schools in Yogyakarta. This research was conducted with descriptive qualitative research methods using interview guidelines. The results showed that the intervention had a positive effect on children's literacy skills. The treatment also has an indirect effect on the class teacher.

Keywords— inclusive education; children with special needs, kindergartens.

I. INTRODUCTION

Inclusion education is education that provides services to every child without exception [1]. Inclusive education in the last decade has begun to show that development meaningful to fulfill the rights and educational needs of children with special needs in Indonesia. so far there have been many statements that open awareness and insight into the importance of education services for children with special needs. However, those who have such awareness and insight are far less than the wider community, most of whom do not have the knowledge and awareness or positive perceptions of inclusive education. Moreover, those few who are not able to put themselves as agents of change in the development of education in Indonesia. Not only the general public, only the regular schools that are now only a small part who voluntarily willing to organize inclusive education, many of them who do not want to open themselves to the presence of children with special needs as they are. Of course, this is accompanied by a variety of reasons created, which academically and administratively allow it to be accepted by all parties. Inclusive education provides space for children from minority groups, in this case children with special needs to get a decent education and equal with other normal children.

One of several studies of kindergarten readiness in children with developmental and delayed disabilities found that 58-96% of children, depending on the category of

disability, did not show the skills that a child transitioning to kindergarten would need to succeed, and thus "not ready" to transition. Furthermore, 62% of these children appeared below academic standards in reading when they were rated again in fourth grade [2].

A. Structure

a) Background

Literacy basically refers to the ability to read and write, this ability is also inseparable from the ability to speak. This is in accordance with the view of writing activities that have a close relationship with reading [3]. Writing is a tool used in communicating and expressing themselves nonverbally. Writing is a complex process because the ability to write requires the coordination of several abilities such as visual-motor perception and conceptual abilities that are strongly influenced by cognitive abilities [4]. Besides Roskos, also added that children need writing to help them learn to read, they need reading to help them learn to write, and they need oral communication to help them learn to read and write [3].

The fact is that our children are diverse, condition, characteristics and culture. Among them are children with special needs' where the general public, or within the Ministry of Social Affairs often call it a person with disability or have a handicap. Two terms that Smith (2006) is very different meanings, disability is the actual state of physical, mental, and emotional, such as people - people who are blind or deaf, who do not have the ability to see or hear. While handicap is a limitation that occurs in individuals due to disability. Such limitations often occur because of assumptions from on objective needs.

Efforts to ensure that children with special needs receive initial treatment have become an obligation for education and to encourage the development of various services and support for Early Childhood Education [5]. One of the main objectives of the initial treatment is to reduce the need for special education services once children enter school, thus preparing them to enter general education [6]. School readiness is very important in determining academic and social success in the next school and even into adulthood [7]. Among school readiness competencies, early literacy skills that form the basis for reading may be very important for academic achievement related to social interaction and behavior in school [8]. This treatment program is designed to prepare children with special needs with behavioral, social, or mutual attention to transition to elementary school. Treatment is given in the form of oral

therapy to children who experience speech delay. Therapy is carried out using large glass faced with children. The child is told to practice speaking in front of the glass. In addition, the use of new learning media that children have never used to attract children's learning interest is adjusted to the abilities of each child.

The research question in this study is how is the initial literacy ability of children with special needs in kindergartens in Yogyakarta? How is the treatment given in learning inclusive education in kindergarten in Yogyakarta? And how are learning and learning tools used for early childhood with special needs in inclusive education?

The purpose of this study was to describe the extent to which the initial literacy program implementation in inclusive education in kindergarten. The focus of this research is how to use deep treatment early literacy skills in children with special needs in kindergarten.

This study only restrict research on the implementation of inclusive education in the kindergarten and just see how the implementation of the program for teaching literacy in kindergarten in its implementation in inclusive education for children with special needs.

The rest of this paper is organized as follow: Section II describes the literature review. Section III describes the proposed and materials method. Section IV presents the obtained result and following by discussion. Finally, Section V concludes this work.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Papalia and Feldman describe literacy as a child's skill in knowledge and attitudes that underlie reading and writing [9]. While describes early literacy as a prediction of success in reading and writing in preschool children or early age and rejecting the achievement of preschool literacy quickly for children who are in the average state of the reader. Literacy basically refers to the ability to read and write, this ability is also inseparable from the ability to speak. This is in accordance view, writing activities have a close relationship with reading. Writing is a tool used in communicating and expressing themselves nonverbally [3]. Writing is a complex process because the ability to write requires the coordination of several abilities such as visual-motor perception and conceptual abilities that are strongly influenced by cognitive abilities [4]. In addition, children need writing to help them learn to read, they need reading to help them learn to write, and they need oral communication to help them learn to read and write [3]. According to Steinberg, the stage of development of early childhood reading skills is: (a) Stage of awareness of writing. Children begin to learn to use books and realize that books are important things, then children see and flip books and then interest in books (b) Stage of reading pictures. Kindergarten-aged children have been able to see themselves as readers, and begin to involve themselves in reading activities, pretending to read books, giving meaning to pictures, using book language even though it does not match the writing. (c) Reading recognition phase. Children who are already interested in reading material begin to recall

the printed letters and their context. Children begin to recognize the signs that are in objects in their environment. (d) The reading stage is smooth. Children can read smoothly different types of books and materials that are directly related to everyday life.

The results of a survey by the Economic Cooperation Development Organization (OECD) show that the reading culture of Indonesian society occupies the lowest position of 52 countries in the East Asia region. Based on a report from the IEA Study of Reading Literacy, the ability of children in Indonesia is still low, in which out of the 31 countries studied, Indonesia ranks 30. Research shows that the difficulties found in children one of them is the basic ability of language in early age [10]. Children aged 2 to 5 years can demonstrate their literacy skills quite rapidly. At the age of 0-3 years, the child should be able to recognize the book by cover, write letters, listen to stories. Then, children aged 3 - 4 years can already recognize simple writing, recognize the sounds of different languages, connect stories in books with reality, are interested in reading books. At the age of 5 years the child should be able to predict the storyline in the book, able to write names and words with [11].

III. MATERIAL & METHODS

This section presents the material used and the proposed method

A. Data

In this study, researchers collected data using interview guidelines about implementing inclusion in kindergartens in Yogyakarta. The interview guidelines used are as follows, which types of ABK are accepted in inclusive schools? how is the initial literacy ability of children with special needs in kindergartens in Yogyakarta? How is the treatment given in learning inclusive education in kindergarten in Yogyakarta? And how are learning and learning tools used for early childhood with special needs in inclusive education?

B. Research Method

This research was conducted with qualitative descriptive research methods using interview guidelines. This research was conducted in July 2018. The respondents involved in this study were the inclusion managers and kindergarten teachers in Yogyakarta.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents the results obtained and following by discussion.

A. Result

The findings of this study are that there are types of ABK who are accepted in Yogyakarta inclusion schools? There are 6 children with ADHD children in the inclusive school, 6 people speech delay, 1 child down syndrome and 1 person autism. Some ADHD children also experience speech delay. What education services are applied to ABK? Educational services in this inclusive school help with children with special needs. The teacher is tasked with assisting the child with a ratio of one teacher to three children for a special type of special needs. However, for children who need more extra handling the comparison is

one child one teacher. The learning done is not the same. Children with special needs are given learning through methods that are acceptable to children. There are no teachers labeled as extraordinary education graduates but, the characteristics of the teachers here have received training from inclusive education training. So that the quality of the existing teacher has been able to support the development of the behavior of children with special needs and have received knowledge about stimulation of child development, so that child development can develop along with the development of regular children.

What is the learning process and the use of learning media for children with ABK? Learning for children with ABK uses media that has a smooth surface that can be touched by children. the learning is not done with the focus of the eyes but is done by playing. For example, the teacher has several balls and the child is asked to pay attention to the teacher. The teacher takes 3 balls and the teacher mentions the word "three". Children listen. Then the teacher asks the child to count one by one the ball provided, when the child takes all the balls, the teacher will tell them that they can only take one at a time while counting by saying the word "one". Many teachers use puzzles and Lego in learning so that children have a little focus on the media provided. Inclusive child learning is always accompanied until the child can adjust to regular children. Learning for children with ABK is not emphasized on cognitive development but adjustment to the environment. The teacher collaborates to carry out the fingerprint test so that information is obtained about what is most in demand by the child. so that the teacher can provide learning in accordance with the things that are of interest to the child. like when ADHD children don't want to focus on learning and tend to run out of class. Parents provide information to the teacher that the child likes to unload electronic goods. Then the teacher gives a broken speaker and gives the child a screwdriver. Then the child wants to sit down and disassemble the speaker. The most important focus in learning for children with ABK is to know the instructions given to children. so that children can learn to control their emotions. Assessment for children with ABK is not child-oriented but changes in children's behavior and concentration. The media used must be child-safe and harmless. For language learning, the teacher uses a mirror to invite children to speak. This is done because some children do not like face to face with other people. The teacher and child together face the glass and the teacher will introduce words to the child and the child is asked to follow while looking in the mirror.

Joint reading techniques are in accordance with the teachings, but teachers prefer to use posters rather than books, even though the teacher still chooses posters that are interesting for children. But teachers focus more on teaching reading and memorizing alphabetical letters and numbers. Talking techniques with children when playing are in accordance with the stages taught, namely talking when children are coloring and drawing, the theme of talking about everyday life. Then for storytelling techniques and reading the story, 50% according to the stages taught is not

based on book language but using their own language that attracts children.

B. Discussion

Early children's literacy skills are influenced by how parents and teachers teach reading and writing to children. According to Ruhaena in [11] there are different perspectives regarding how parents or teachers teach reading and writing to children, namely (1) holistic, this view shows behavior that supports, facilitates, and provides examples of daily reading and writing activities that have goals and meanings. The usual literacy activities are inviting children to talk, discuss, and read story books to children. (2) components, this view focuses on teaching literacy such as introducing the word itself through the teaching of alphabets, words, sentences, and stories in sequence. (3) Holistic and Component Integration, a view that combines these two views, to be more effective in improving children's literacy skills. This is done by means of (a) learning emphasizes more on aspects of meaning / literacy meaning, (b) literacy activity is a process carried out by individuals but gets motivation from outside (environment), (c) natural treatment is important to support children who are able to read and writing independently starting from an early age to being refined in formal school, but for children who are unable to do it themselves, there needs to be structured teaching, d) giving treatment outside of school is very important to support the success of literacy processes in schools, (e) important treatment is given since early age because it can help the development of children's brain cells.

V. CONCLUSIONS

This study has described of early literacy skills in children with special needs in kindergarten. The results of the study showed that the treatment giving program was effective in improving literacy skills. The next finding is parents' awareness and understanding of the importance of literacy stimulation as the basis for developing children's literacy skills. This proves that by providing stimulation in the form of appropriate literacy media for children can foster interest in children to conduct literacy activities to improve their literacy skills.

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