Inclusive Learning System in Arabic Subjects for Mentally Retarded Students

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Abstract

This study aims to determine the application of an inclusive learning system in Arabic language subjects for mentally retarded students. This research is a qualitative study with a descriptive qualitative approach. This type of research is field research in which the data collection process is carried out directly in the field with case study techniques for mentally retarded children in Arabic classes at Al Firdaus Junior High School, especially in class IX. Data collection was done through interviews, observations and document studies. The data were analyzed using interactive data analysis techniques: data collection, data reduction, data presentation and conclusion drawing. The results show that inclusive learning is implemented using a modification system that includes content, process, evaluation, product, time and learning environment modification. This means that the subject matter, learning process, type of evaluation, products to be produced, learning time and learning environment will be adjusted to the conditions and needs of students to help them gain comfort in learning, which will help them achieve the desired competencies. The obstacles encountered are related to moods that are sometimes not good, as well as difficulties in writing Arabic writing, reading, interpreting and memorizing. In overcoming them, assistance and guidance from shadow teachers are prioritized, as well as support from subject teachers.

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui penerapan sistem pembelajaran inklusif pada mata pelajaran bahasa Arab bagi siswa retardasi mental. Penelitian ini...
merupakan penelitian kualitatif dengan pendekatan kualitatif dekriptif. Jenis penelitian ini yakni penelitian lapangan yang proses pengambilan datanya dilakukan secara langsung di lapangan dengan teknik studi kasus terhadap anak-anak retardasi mental pada kelas Bahasa Arab di SMP Al Firdaus, khususnya pada kelas IX. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui wawancara, observasi serta studi dokumen. Data dianalisis dengan teknik analisis data interaktif yang terdiri dari pengumpulan data, reduksi data, penyajian data dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa pembelajaran inklusif yang diterapkan menggunakan sistem modifikasi yang meliputi modifikasi konten, proses, evaluasi, produk, waktu serta lingkungan belajar. Artinya, materi pelajaran, proses pembelajaran, jenis evaluasi, produk yang akan dihasilkan, waktu belajar hingga lingkungan belajar akan disesuaikan dengan kondisi serta kebutuhan peserta didik sehingga membantu mereka memperoleh kenyamanan dalam pembelajaran yang kemudian akan membantu mereka mencapai kompetensi yang diinginkan. Adapun kendala yang didapati yakni terkait mood yang terkadang tidak baik, serta kesulitan dalam menulis tulisan arab, membaca, mengartikan serta menghafal. Dalam mengatasinya, pendampingan serta bimbingan dari Guru Pendamping Khusus sangat diutamakan serta dukungan dari guru mata pelajaran.

I. INTRODUCTION

Implementing an inclusive education system for children with special needs is an effort to fulfill every child's right to obtain a proper education. The principle of providing education should be held democratically, fairly, and non-discriminatory, and uphold human rights, religious and cultural values, and national pluralism by Law No. 20 of 2003 Article 4 paragraph 1 (UU No 20, 2003). Students with physical, emotional, mental, and social disabilities and who have special intelligence or talent potential, commonly known as Children with Special Needs, have the right to attend inclusive education in educational units that suit their needs and abilities (Kasih, 2019). This is explained in the Regulation of the Minister of National Education of the Republic of Indonesia number 70 of 2009 article 3 concerning inclusive education (Rofiah & Rofiana, 2017).

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Inclusion education is defined as an educational service system that includes students with special needs status along with normal students in regular schools, which aims to make children with special needs inseparable from their environment as much as possible (Nurhadisah, 2019). The implementation of inclusive education opens opportunities for all children to participate fully in the classroom regardless of racial or other differences (Siddiq & Istifadah, 2018; Puspitaningtyas, 2020).

There are many classifications of disabilities, and one of them is mental retardation (Kirana & Agustini, 2018). Mental retardation is a condition in which a person has below-average intellectual function and experiences obstacles in adaptive behaviour. This impaired intellectual function impacts children with mental retardation in their learning process (Mustikawati et al., 2015). These include cognitive abilities, communication, and movement and social skills. The inhibition of some of these aspects will affect the child’s ability to follow the learning process, which results in the child having difficulty learning in the classroom (Nasution, 2020). Therefore, special needs students in this category usually get more attention from teachers (Dermawan, 2013).

Al-Firdaus Junior High School is one of the secondary schools in the Solo Raya area that has implemented an inclusive education system since 2003. In 2012, Al Firdaus Junior High School was named the school with the best inclusive education at the 2012 Inclusive Education Award (Muharam, 2013). Al Firdaus Junior High School, as a reference-inclusive school, also accommodates students with mental retardation. Al Firdaus Junior High School, as a reference-inclusive school, also accommodates students with mental retardation. This category is one of the most common (Ramayumi et al., 2017).

Al-Firdaus Junior High School is also an Islamic-based Junior High School. Thus, its subjects also include lessons related to Islam, one of which is Arabic. The exhortation to learn Arabic, although not explicitly commanded by Allah, but Allah’s statement in the Qur’an as in QS. Az-Zumar verses 27-28 mention that the Qur’an, the source of education and knowledge, is written in perfect Arabic and full of teaching. The statement seems to provide evidence of the importance of
Arabic language education in developing knowledge and technology. Al Jauzi also explained that the Qur’an was revealed in Arabic, the language of the Quraysh, which is easy to understand and can be used to explain the obligatory laws (Nisa’, 2022). However, on the other hand, difficulties in learning Arabic are still often found (Wekke, 2018).

Arabic is considered a fairly difficult subject for some learners, especially for those who do not have a background related to it or have not had basic knowledge before. The feeling of difficulty in learning Arabic is also very likely to occur among students with disabilities, including students with mental retardation (Lisnawati et al., 2014). This is because, in general, the problem of language impairment in mentally retarded people is slow. This is due to the relationship between cognitive abnormalities and failure to acquire full linguistic competence (Harimi & Ambarwati, 2021).

Based on research by Devi Ambarwati and Abdal Chaqil Harimi at Qaryah Thayyibah Purwokerto Primary School shows that Arabic language learning applied to students with intellectual disabilities tends to be an introductory activity in Arabic based on the abilities of each ABK. There are no specific strategies or methods for learning Arabic for children with disabilities (Harimi & Ambarwati, 2021). As for Itsam Samrotul Fuadah and Esi Hairani in their research, it was found that the implementation of inclusive learning, especially in Arabic language subjects at Pelita Bangsa GIS Elementary School Arabic language learning planning for students with disabilities, is carried out regularly and also clusters with supervision and guidance by inclusive teachers (shadow teachers). The material coverage and competency achievements in learning are adjusted to the abilities of each student with disabilities. The same applies to assessment or evaluation (Fuadah & Hairani, 2020).

Previous studies have illustrated the implementation of inclusive learning in Arabic subjects. However, the categories of special needs students studied are still general or broad, and most research is carried out at the basic education level. Therefore, research is needed at a higher level of education because looking at the scope of material is certainly wider with a more difficult level. So it is
necessary to see how the design and implementation of Arabic language learning for mentally retarded students, starting from providing material, using strategies/methods to evaluating what is applied to them.

II. METHODS

This research is a qualitative study with a descriptive qualitative approach oriented towards providing a detailed and in-depth description of a phenomenon. This type of research is field research. The data collection process is carried out directly in the field with case study techniques on children with disabilities in Arabic language subjects at Al-Firdaus Junior High School, especially in class IX. The reason for choosing the school is because Al-Firdaus Junior High School is one of the secondary schools that has been implementing the inclusive education system for a long time and is also known for its good implementation.

Data collection is carried out by (1) interview techniques, where the interview is defined as an activity where there is a dialogue between the interviewer and the interviewee to obtain information (Alhamid, 2019), (2) observation techniques whose data collection involves direct observation of participants and things involved in the phenomenon under study that can be done in real situations or environments specifically designed for research, and (3) Documentation techniques involving archives, documents or written materials related to research (Ardiansyah et al., 2023). This study's data source is the Inclusion Coordinator, Shadow Teachers, and especially Arabic subject Teachers.

After the data is obtained and collected, the data is analyzed using the interactive data analysis technique proposed by Miles & Huberman which consists of (1) data reduction, which is the process of sorting, focusing, simplifying and abstracting from all types of information supporting research data obtained during the data search process in the field, (2) data presentation, data presentation, in which a set of information is organized so that it can lead to the possibility of drawing conclusions and taking action (Rijali, 2018), (3) and conclusion drawing/verification, where at this stage the researcher conducts interpretation activities on the results of the analysis and interpretation of the data that has been carried out.
III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Inclusion Education at Al Firdaus Junior High School

Al Firdaus Junior High School is an Islamic-based junior high school on Jl. Al Kautsar, Sukoharjo, Central Java. The school is known as one of the best inclusive schools, so it becomes a reference for other inclusive schools around Solo Raya. An inclusive education system in schools has been implemented since the establishment of Al Firdaus Junior High School. Starting from establishing preschool and elementary school education units that implement an inclusive system, this was later implemented when Al-Firdaus Junior High School and Senior High School were established. In its implementation, the school cooperates with Unit Pusat Pelayanan Anak Berkebutuhan Khusus (Puspa). Puspa is a unit formed by the Al Firdaus Foundation, which engages in assessment services, therapy, and child self-development and handles children with special needs.

In the implementation of inclusive education, Al Firdaus Junior High School accepts all types or categories of Children with Special Needs such as autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy, hyperactivity, hearing or speech loss, developmental delay disorders, sensory-motor disorders, and speech delays. Al Firdaus Junior High School has not accepted children with visual impairments due to the lack of adequate resources to accept children with these needs.

For this reason, before the special needs children are accepted, the school also conducts a series of processes that need to be undergone by the special needs children in order to see and assess the extent of their abilities, ranging from cognitive, social, and psychomotor abilities so that it can be considered by the school and make it easier to determine how education and care services should be right for them. From that series of processes, the diversity of each child with special needs will be found (Inclusive Coordinator, 2023).

The admission process for students with special needs at Al Firdaus Junior High School is the same as that for regular students. Where the initial stage that needs to be passed is the identification stage. This identification is collecting initial information related to the student's condition to determine if the student experiences potential abnormalities or learning obstacles. This identification
process includes parent interviews and child observation to see whether special conditions can interfere with their learning, learning readiness, health checks and case reports. Furthermore, suppose students are identified as disabled or have special needs. In that case, students will carry out further assessments handled by experts to dig deeper into the child's profile. The assessment has several aspects, including cognitive aspects, communication, self-development, social interaction, behaviour, motor senso, emotional maturity, and academic abilities including reading, writing and arithmetic.

In implementing learning, special needs students will be united with regular students in the same classroom. However, with a note that the special needs students are qualified to follow heterogeneous learning in class. If special needs students experience tantrums at any time and disturb the classroom atmosphere, individual learning will be held outside the classroom. As for some special needs students who are still comprehensively slow so that when learning or on certain subjects they cannot follow, then students still enter the class but with different material weights.

The school provides shadow teachers in an inclusive implementation at Al Firdaus Junior High School. The shadow teachers division model consists of 2 techniques: individual and grouping. The distribution of 1 shadow teacher for 1 child is a model if the special needs students are classified as heavy. However, if special needs students belong to the medium category, then 1 shadow teacher holds 2 children (Inclusive Coordinator, 2023).

In the inclusion class, of course, not all special needs students can follow the learning according to the weight set for regular children. So, Al Firdaus Junior High School implemented curriculum modifications for special needs students there. Curriculum modification is divided into process modification, material modification, time modification, and evaluation modification. And it is done depending on the needs of the special needs students.
Learning Strategies for Mentally Retarded Children in Arabic Inclusion Class at Al Firdaus Junior High School

In implementing learning, Al Firdaus Junior High School itself applies differentiated learning. So, in learning Arabic, of course, the same strategy will be applied. This is no exception for children with special needs who attend school there, including children with the category of mental retardation (Arabic Teacher, 2023).

Differentiated learning is a learning model where student diversity, which includes readiness, interests and learning preferences, is recognized, accommodated and served (Marlina, 2020). This learning model basically holds the view that learners are different and dynamic. Therefore, differentiated learning is based on modifications that include 4 components, ranging from modifications to content, processes, products and learning environments. Thus, this differentiated learning is an effort to improve student learning outcomes by adjusting student interests, preferences, and readiness for learning. There are several criteria for this learning approach, namely 1) Flexible 2) Provision of learning assignments that are by student interests and readiness to learn while still based on the designed learning objectives, 3) Student assessment and learning needs become the basis of learning, 4) Students learn based on the same curriculum objectives but using various learning success criteria, 5) The student determines the way of learning, 6) The structure of activities Learning.

In general, the purpose of self-differentiated learning is to facilitate learning for students by paying attention to their interests, readiness and learning preferences. In particular, differentiated learning aims to help all students learn, increase student motivation and learning outcomes, establish harmonious relationships between teachers and students, help students become independent learners and increase teacher satisfaction (Marlina, 2020). Because the application of differentiated learning accepts and accommodates students' intellectual diversity and abilities, this learning model is considered appropriate to be applied in inclusive schools, where there are students with special needs with different categories and abilities. The goal is that students with special needs should be
able to achieve the goals designed in the curriculum through adaptation to their abilities. In this way, students are helped to develop their potential and can be helped to cope with the obstacles they encounter during the learning process with the limitations they experience (Wardani, 2022). In this case, Arabic learning at Al Firdaus Junior High School also applies a differentiated learning model that aims to facilitate the interests and abilities of different children to present complete interest and motivation for learning for students.

The application of differentiated learning at Al Firdaus Junior High School Surakarta, especially for special needs students, is more or less the same as in general, which includes 4 modifications. These modifications include content, process, evaluation, time and learning environment modification. So, its application in the Arabic subject inclusion class of Al Firdaus Junior High School Surakarta is the same; 4 types of modifications are applied if needed. All special needs students received the same application of learning, including children with the category of mental retardation (Padila et al., 2021).

1. Content modification

Content means what students will know, understand and learn (Suwartiningsih, 2021). Content modification is the adjustment of content or learning materials to meet the needs of individuals or diverse groups of students. In Arabic class, all grade IX students with the mental retardation category will be given content modifications. This content modification is done by lowering the weight or scope of the material from its proper grade level. If they are currently in class IX, the weight of the Arabic material they are studying is lowered to a class corresponding to their comprehension ability. So, the grade or grade level set can vary according to the needs and abilities of these students (Arabic Teacher, 2023).

2. Process modification

The process is defined as the way students acquire information or how students learn (Kamal, 2021; Rahmawati, 2023). Process modification can be an adjustment between the way teachers teach and how students learn according to the needs and skills of different students so that students get a relevant and meaningful learning experience. Based on observations that have been made, it
was found that in learning Arabic, the application of process modification for mental retardation children can be categorized as follows:

a. Follow the learning flow like a regular student

In some topics of discussion that are still light and feel mental retardation, students can follow, then students will follow the learning flow in class as they should be like regular students. In this case, of course, mental retardation students remain under the supervision and assistance of their accompanying teachers to help perfect understanding, work on and complete teacher instructions, help students when they encounter difficulties and correct if they make mistakes or mistakes.

b. Getting tasks related to the matter

For mental retardation students who cannot follow the class material as they should, students will be given light assignments according to the student's level (grade) but still related to the learning topic that takes place. For example, when the topic discussed is about the Hijri months in the qira'ah subchapter, mental retardation students who cannot follow are given the task of writing the names of the Hijri months by their accompanying teacher. Of course, by being supervised and assisted by his accompanying teacher in doing so, giving understanding, and completing the task well.

3. Evaluation modifications

In an inclusive education setting, the expected evaluation system is flexible. That is an evaluation that is able to adjust to the competence of all students, including students with special needs. Modifications can be related to the test question, time, place, evaluation techniques, or others, including, related to changes in determining graduation criteria, class advancement systems, the form of student report cards, diplomas, and others (Maftuhatin, 2014). This is also applied in implementing inclusive education at Al Firdaus Junior High School Surakarta, which also runs a modified curriculum system (Inclusive Coordinator, 2023).
4. Product modifications

Product means relating to something that students produce from what has been learned (Anggraini, 2023). Talking about products means that it is still related to evaluation. The two are mutually continuous. The product can be said to be the output of the evaluation carried out. In Arabic language learning, as well as the application of modifications in schools, mental retardation students, including other special needs students, will experience differences regarding the products produced with regular students. Differences can be found in the type, weight or criteria of the product to be produced. This is because their abilities cannot always be equated with regular children (Arabic Teacher, 2023).

5. Time modification

Time modification in Arabic learning for mental retardation children is in the form of additional time for repetition of material or provision of additional material either from subject teachers or from shadow teachers. Repetition of material carried out with subject teachers is usually done before children carry out summative exams. Where they will gather and discuss the materials that have been learned together so that they can help mentally retardation children and other special needs children understand the material and remember it (Arabic Teacher, 2023).

6. Modification of the learning environment

The learning environment relates to how students feel and the way students work in learning (Herwina, 2021). Modifying the learning environment itself is an effort to modify the atmosphere or physical arrangement of the place or learning environment so that it better supports students' learning process. In Arabic language learning at Al Firdaus Junior High School, this modification will be applied when you find a situation where special needs students are in an unpleasant heart condition so that tantrums arise and result in class conditions being disturbed, or it could also be because special need students feel bored with learning and to maintain the condition of the heart so that they still want to learn, then students will be invited to go outside the classroom and look for other places.
of learning that are more supportive to be given individual learning (Arabic Teacher, 2023; Shadow Teachers AB, 2023).

**Obstacles of Mentally Retarded Children in Arabic Inclusion Classes and Solutions**

A brief overview of the learning system applied in the Arabic class for Mentally Retarded Students in grade IX of Al Firdaus Junior High School can be seen in the diagram below.

![Diagram of the Application of Arabic Learning Modification for Mental Retardation Students](image)

**Figure 1. Application of Arabic Learning Modification for Mental Retardation Students**

1. **Bad mood**

   It is undeniable that there are times when special needs students experience situations or heart conditions that are not good, causing children to become discouraged, not interested in participating in learning, or to experience tantrums. The usual causes come from problems experienced before going to school, such as being rushed when going to school because it is almost late, and the like. This can impact the child's mood and result in children not being effective in following learning or completely unable to follow learning. When there are obstacles like this in the classroom, the solutions offered are:

   a. If the child is still allowed to be in the classroom, then the child is still left in the classroom. Even if they do not participate in learning, if they do not
tantrum, children will be given the freedom to enter the classroom. This can improve the mood of children or even increase their interest in participating in learning.

b. Suppose the child is not able to be in the classroom. In that case, the child will be taken out of the classroom accompanied, of course, by his shadow teacher, and if possible, learning and individual learning will be carried out according to the child's condition.

2. Understanding and simple skills

It is understandable that mental retardation children experience such problems. Due to different intellectual abilities, they have the potential to experience difficulties or obstacles in terms of intellectual skills. Among the common obstacles experienced by mental retardation children in Arabic inclusion classes are:

a. Write, there are some mental retardation children who have problems in their writing skills. It's not that they can't write Arabic script; it's just that the writing is still unclear (Shadow Teachers A, 2023) or the writing of the letters is imperfect (Shadow Teachers MH, 2023). In overcoming this, usually shadow teachers from each child always accompany, correct, and direct or guide children to be able to improve and perfect their writing.

b. Interpret, other obstacles are also found in the matter of interpreting words. Due to their slightly slower memory ability, then, of course, in terms of interpreting vocabulary of other languages, they find it a little difficult. In order to be able to interpret foreign language vocabulary, children need to memorize vocabulary from foreign languages learned in order to be able to interpret words or sentences (Shadow Teachers AS, 2023). Therefore, repetition continues to be pursued to hone children's memory and build their memories of the meanings of simple vocabulary learned in Arabic language learning.

c. Memorize, similarly memorization is also one of the obstacles experienced by mentally retardation children in Arabic class. Therefore, the solution is
the same, namely by doing continuous repetition until they are able to remember it (Shadow Teachers MH, 2023).

IV. CONCLUSION

The learning needed by children with special needs includes mental retardation, in addition to humane services and care from teachers, it is also necessary to design appropriate learning systems to help children achieve improved academic, social, and other skills that help them to be more skilled in daily life and not far behind their peers. As applied in Arabic language learning at Al Firdaus Junior High School, which applies differentiated learning for mentally retarded children and other special needs students. Differentiation includes material, process, evaluation, time as well as learning environment. The differentiation applied aims to make the learning provided able to adjust to the abilities and needs of children so that they are not burdened and comfortable following learning. The obstacles found in learning can vary, ranging from mood regulation and difficulties in simple skills such as writing, reading Arabic script, interpreting and memorization. However, so far, these things can still be overcome with constant assistance from shadow teachers and support from subject teachers.

V. BIBLIOGRAPHY


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