

The Implementation Of Character-Based Individualized Learning For Junior High School Students With Dyslexia

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Abstract : *This study discusses the description of the implementation of learning for dyslexic students in the Inclusive School of SMP N 19 Ambon. It aims at providing an overview of the implementation of learning for dyslexic students who have been going on in SMP N 19 Ambon. This type of research is descriptive qualitative with observation, interview and documentation technique. This research found that the learning of Pancasila and civic education subject conducted in class VIII of the inclusive school of SMP N 19 Ambon has not been effective in reaching the values of characters that are expected to develop in dyslexic students, and not yet fully accommodate their learning needs. The applied learning is still full of regularity without modification. The amount of material content is considered the student as a burden, so that they are unable to respond both orally and in written. Therefore a model that can accommodate the learning needs of dyslexic students is needed.*

Keywords - Individualized Learning, Characters, Students with Dyslexia

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I. Introduction

International Education for All (EFA) call, echoed by UNESCO as a global agreement resulting from the World Education Forum in Dakar, Senegal in 2000, for EFA completion was expected to have been achieved in 2015. This program enables children with special needs to gain knowledge in public schools as normal children (in inclusive schools). "Indonesia towards Inclusive Education" was formally declared on 11 August 2004 in Bandung, which was expected to support regular schools to prepare education for all children without exception. The result of this declaration was followed up by the issuance of the Regulation of the Minister of National Education No. 70 of 2009.

Successful implementation of inclusive education will depend on both teachers and parents. In inclusive education, an educational service system for children with special needs in regular schools is indispensable, which is curriculum. A curriculum is designed to realize educational goals. The results of a study conducted by [1], entitled "Inclusive Education: Perceptions of Parents of Children with Special Needs of the Individual Program Planning Process" revealed that, in inclusive education, students with special needs can access curriculum and learning through individualized plans. Parental involvement in developing individualized educational plans is associated with the educational success of their children and the plans themselves. In the view of inclusive education, regular curriculum is considered insensitive to seeing children as unique and intact individuals. In terms of the individual potential of a dyslexic child, behind the fact that they experience problems and limitations in learning, they can solve problems in some cases that other children cannot.

Inclusive schools require the implementation of an IEP (Individualized Educational Program) for students with disabilities and who require special education because this program implements a curriculum adapted to students' disabilities. The implementation of an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) known as the Individual Learning Program takes into account access in general curriculum, how the limitations and/or disabilities influence students' learning, goals and objectives that provide significant changes to students, and ultimately choices related to placement in an environment with minimal limitations [2]. This is in line with a study by [3] entitled "Effective Use of Assistive Technologies for Inclusive Education in Developing Countries" that revealed the effectiveness of learning and technology for inclusive education designed to address students' needs.

A study conducted by [4] show that schools that implement inclusive education system not only provide opportunities for children with special needs to attend educational activities at their institutions with other children, but also address their needs with regard to their disabilities. The research conducted by [5] also revealed that "61% of public school teachers and 54% of private school teachers at the elementary level reported that they had never had any training in teaching gifted students". So far, there are still many inclusive schools that have not yet developed and managed individualized educational programs for students with disabilities, and

students should attend general education programs without specific actions to help them optimize their capabilities. Therefore, it is important to implement IEP for students with special needs in inclusive schools in accordance with their disabilities with appropriate design. The same reality is faced also by several schools included in a pilot project related to Inclusive Education in Ambon City.

Thus, a subject teacher in an inclusive school is not only responsible for providing learning but is, more than that, obliged to recognize and understand the background of each individual being taught, so that the approach applied in learning can answer individual needs without ignoring difficulties faced by students. Learning that is not well modified is also one of the reasons students with reading disability (dyslexia) are not motivated to follow the learning process that takes place in the classroom; their reluctance to communicate often keeps them away from their friends because of shame or inferiority; their lack of discipline indicates a variety of disrespectful attitudes during the learning process, causes them not to pay attention to their teacher while explaining and to ignore the tasks assigned by their teacher.

In relation to these issues, learning that addresses the needs of dyslexic students, in addition to learning appropriate to inclusive/group setting and individual setting that view students based on their needs, should also consider the characters of dyslexic students that arise due to the effects of environmental conditions, or a form of statement towards surrounding conditions and situations. Teachers need to take this into consideration so that individualized learning model contains values that can help dyslexic students become better individuals and develop their potential optimally. Referring to this reality, the research question formulated is "How is the Implementation of Character-based Individualized Learning for Students with dyslexia at SMPN 19 Ambon Inclusive School?" Therefore, the objective of this study is to describe the learning process of students with dyslexia that has been taking place at SMPN 19 Ambon.

II. Literature Review

An individualized learning program for children with special needs starts from the awareness of differences among them who in essence require special handling to develop their own potential. Individualized learning program is a system that states where a child is, where he/she is going, how to achieve that goal, and how to state the achievement of that goal [6]. This Learning Program is based on a humanistic philosophy that emphasizes the importance of individual uniqueness for free will in actualizing themselves [7].

In the humanistic theory of learning, learning process must return to the human beings themselves. This theory is more about education and learning process in their most ideal form, and learning is considered successful if the students understand the environment and themselves [8]. Humanistic theory of learning basically has a purpose to humanize human beings. According to humanistic theory, the main purpose of educators is to help students develop themselves, helping each individual to understand themselves as unique human beings and assist them in realizing the potential that exists within them [9]. Children with reading disability who are referred to as dyslexic students need special treatment with individualized learning approach and varied methods to accommodate their learning needs so that, if possible, their low processing speed can be developed to experience improvement in learning.

In relation to this problem, dyslexic children compared to normal children in the same CA (chronological age) cognitively, some of them will be left behind, but if they are compared to normal children in the same MA (mental age), theoretically they will have the same level of development as normal children [10]. Learning problems of dyslexic children have often become an obstacle in learning process. Therefore, in teaching and learning process that engages dyslexic children, it is necessary to apply a model that can facilitate their learning, foster their motivation, encourage and optimize their ability, and that is enjoyable and fun.

Learning model for children with special needs, in this case dyslexic students, certainly is different from the learning model applied by the teacher to every normal student. Implementation of appropriate learning model for children is very important in supporting their learning achievement. On the contrary, inappropriate learning model will not develop the students, especially those with special needs. In learning setting, the school is highly expected to be able to accommodate all children according to their learning needs regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, and emotional condition.

The learning model is a plan or pattern used as a guideline in planning learning in the classroom or in determining learning tools [11]. Learning model is a learning perspective strategy designed to achieve learning objectives [12]. Furthermore, learning model refers to the learning approach to be applied, and refers to the learning environment and classroom management [13].

Individualized Learning Program (ILP) is a model of curriculum adjustment form issued by the government to answer the needs of children with special needs, and is a learning program that is tailored to individual needs with different material contents from groups in classroom and that is implemented in a classical setting. Either individually or in groups, education through learning programs in schools must be able to produce beings that have noble character, in addition to having sufficient academic abilities and skills. The intended character education is a kind of education that can bring learners to the recognition of values

cognitively, appreciation of values affectively, and eventually to the practice of values in real life. This is a design of character education (moral) that is referred to as moral knowing, moral feeling, and moral action [14]. One way to humanize human beings is to integrate character education in learning process.

III. Research Method

This study employs a qualitative approach. Qualitative research is a study that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by the research subjects, such as behaviors, perceptions, motivations, actions and so on, holistically and descriptively in the form of words and language in a specific and natural context and by utilizing various naturalistic methods [15].

This study uses three techniques of data collection, namely observation, interviews and documentation. Document collection is a means of obtaining data by collecting all sorts of documents which is performed systematically. The document collection begins in the analysis phase at SMP Negeri 19 Ambon. The documents collected are recapitulation of KKM (Minimum Completeness Criteria) scores of dyslexia students at grade VIII for the PPKN subject (Pancasila and Civic Education), syllabus, text books, and LKS (students' worksheet) used in the learning process. "Questionnaire technique is a data collection technique performed by giving a set of questions or written statements to the respondents to answer" [16]. This research was conducted at SMPN 19 Ambon. Why was SMPN 19 Ambon selected as the research location?. The answer to this question is that SMPN 19 Ambon is a school included in the pilot project of inclusive education in Ambon city. In qualitative research, the uniqueness of the research location is one of the considerations for choosing it. Qualitative sampling is closely related to contextual factors so that this uniqueness is addressed to get as much information as possible from various sources [15].

IV. Results

The results of this study provide the description of the learning process of the students with dyslexia (reading difficulty) at SMPN 19 Ambon inclusive school consisting of learning needs analysis, student analysis, task analysis, concept analysis, and the formulation of learning objectives.

1.1. Needs Analysis

Table 1. Recapitulation of Research Results on the Initial Description of the Teaching and Learning Process at SMPN 19 Ambon Inclusive School

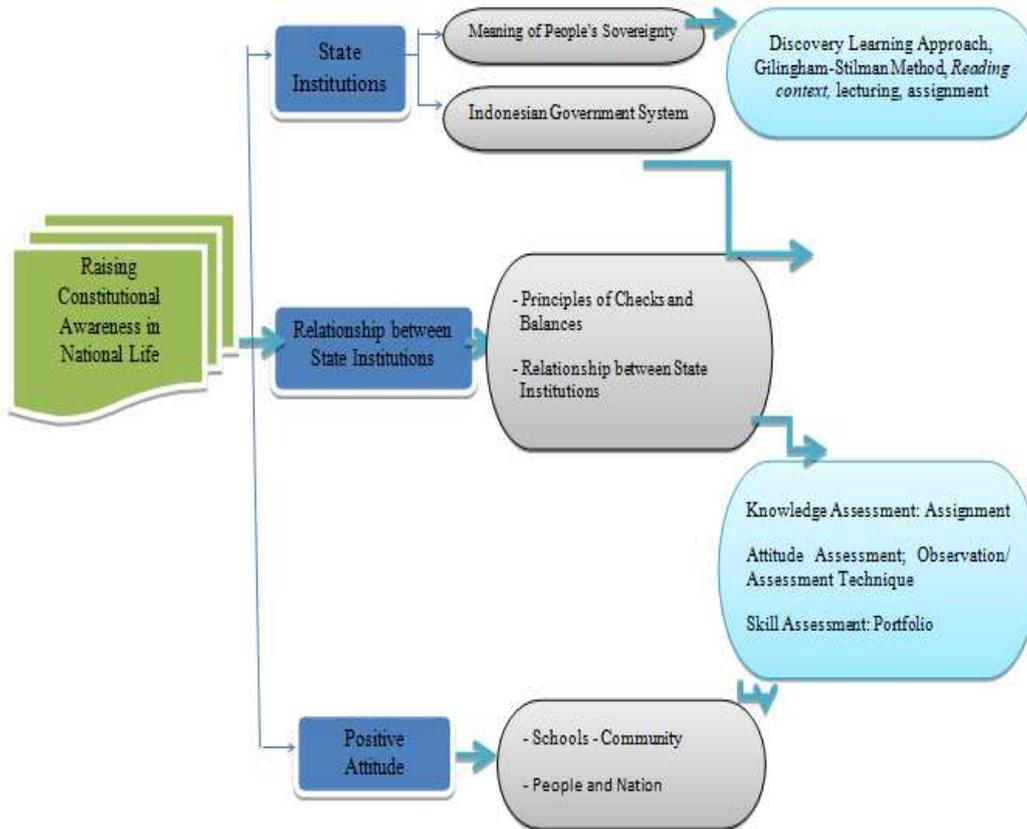
No	Components Observed	Category				%
		Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor	
1.	Observation of the Learning Documents used (curriculum, syllabus, Lesson Plan, Student Worksheet, etc.)	1	4	1		75
2.	Observation of the characteristics of the students (interests, attitudes, learning motivation, thinking ability, and their initial ability)		5	1		80
3.	Observation of students' activities in learning process		2	3	1	50
4.	Observation of teacher's activities	1	5			80
5.	Observation of students' learning result documents		3	3		50
6.	Observation of media/tools used in learning process	1	4	1		80
7.	Observation of facilities and infrastructure	3	2	1		75
8.	Tasks Analysis Task analysis is the analysis of the contents of the learning material, concept analysis, analysis of information processing, and analysis of the procedures used to facilitate students' understanding or mastery of the learning tasks and learning objectives as outlined in the form of lesson plan and students' worksheet, consisting of:	3	3	2		80
9.	Observation of the character of dyslexic students in learning process/anecdotal records made by the teacher (containing records of the students' learning progress, inactive students, students who do not do homework, etc.)	3	3	2		80

1.2. Results of Concept Design

Based on the initial analysis, the next step was analysis of the concept of the materials to be taught and to prepare the procedure carried out rationally. In this case, the researcher analyzed the concepts or key parts of the learning materials by using the Character-based Individualized Learning model in accordance with the syntax and steps of the learning process listed in the lesson plan.

The result of this analysis is presented in the concept map as follows:

Figure 1. Materials and Process Map on PPKN Learning at Class VIII Semester 1



1.3. Analysis of Characters Expected to Develop in Dyslexic Students in Learning Process in Classroom

In the implementation of character-based learning, characters expected to develop in the students after following the learning process are communicative/friendly, disciplined, and responsible.

Tabel 2. Recapitulation of Character Assessment Results during Individualized Learning

No	Types of Character	Indicators	Meeting				Total	%
			1	2	3	4		
1	Communicative/ Friendly	- Ability to deliver observation results		√	√	√		80
		- Ability to ask the teacher			√	√	√	80
		- Ability to find information	√	√	√	√		80
		- Ability to convey ideas			√	√	√	80
		- Ability to confirm obstacles faced			√	√	√	100
2	Discipline	- Paying attention to the teacher explanations	√	√	√	√		100
		- Listening to the teacher explanations	√	√	√	√		100
		- Completing the assigned tasks			√	√	√	80

		- Practicing as instructed by the teacher		√	√	√		80
		- Asking politely		√	√	√		80
3	Responsible	- Observing according to the teacher's direction	√	√	√	√		100
		- Doing tasks		√	√	√		80
		- Responsible for the tasks		√	√	√		80
		- Submitting tasks on time		√	√	√		80
		- Delivering the results of the tasks orally or through media		√	√	√		80

V. Discussion

To describe the teaching and learning process of students with dyslexia at SMPN 19 Ambon, the procedure undertaken was conducting needs analysis as a scientific activity to identify supporting and inhibiting factors of the learning process in order to select and determine appropriate and relevant media to achieve the learning objectives and lead to quality improvement of education. Needs analysis was intended to determine the needs or expectations that the students want to have after they complete an educational level. This is done to anticipate the quality degradation of the qualifications that must be met. From the results of recapitulation of the initial description of the teaching and learning process at the SMPN 19 Ambon Inclusive School, there are still some weaknesses that need to be improved. This can be seen from the 8 indicators of the needs analysis results that none of which was implemented 100%.

In the analysis phase, interviews and observation were conducted on one of the PPKN subject teachers. The problem found in learning is that dyslexic students had relatively low learning outcomes. This is because the PPKN learning focused more on memorization, and had dense material contents so that dyslexic students tended to feel bored, saturated and consider learning as a burden. In addition, the teacher has not been able to develop an effective learning model according to the students' learning needs because the learning needs of dyslexic students are different from normal students' learning needs. Therefore, it is necessary to develop a learning model that can accommodate the learning needs of students with dyslexia through which an interactive, inspirational, fun, challenging and motivational learning will be created. One of the factors that influence the learning process and the learning outcomes of dyslexic students at SMPN 19 as an inclusive school is the unavailability of teaching staff with Special Educational background so that their understanding on the implementation of learning with modified curriculum model is still very poor. It is evident in the learning process that the learning model with a full regular curriculum did not 100% accommodate the learning needs of all students.

Furthermore, analysis of the students' characters was performed. From this, it was found that the characteristics of the students' learning styles at SMPN 19 Ambon varied; visual, auditory and kinesthetic. In addition, the students' PPKN learning, specifically for dyslexic students, have not been optimal and have not produced optimal results and reached the KKM. Moreover, supporting factors in this case media and infrastructure and facilities at SMPN Negeri 19 Ambon which is included in the pilot project of inclusive education are inadequate to support learning. From these findings, the next step taken was the task analysis to determine the material used as a reference in the implementation of character-based Individualized learning for dyslexic students.

The material set forth was "Raising Constitutional Awareness in National Life" consisting of several sub-topics: 1) State Institutions, 2) Relationship between State Institutions, and 3) Positive Attitudes towards government regulations. The steps in this learning process adapted the steps of scientific learning presented as follows:

The steps of learning with this scientific approach become part of the implementation of character-based individualized learning by following the model components proposed by Joyce, Weil & Showers (2011) which includes (1) syntax, which is a sequence of learning activities also called phase, (2) social system, which is the role of teachers and learners, and the types of rules required, (3) principles of reaction, which is giving the teacher a description of how to view or respond to the learners' questions, (4) support system, referring to the conditions required by the model and (5) instructional and nurturant effects; the instructional effects are the learning outcomes achieved by directing the learners to the expected goals, while the nurturant effects are other learning results produced by a learning process as a result of the creation of learning atmosphere experienced directly by the learners without direction from their teacher or mentor.

Furthermore, in its implementation to dyslexic students, the form of Individualized Learning Program (ILP) for Children with Special Needs by Mercer & Mercer (1989) was adapted by the authors in the

implementation of character-based individualized learning for Children with reading difficulty (dyslexia) in an inclusive school. Individual learning done for dyslexic students was weighted with three character traits, namely communicative, discipline, and responsible.

From the recapitulation of the character assessment during the learning process that lasted for 4 meetings, not all the expected indicators of each character including communicative, disciplined and friendly are explored in dyslexic students. The results of the analysis indicate that the achievement of each character indicators were only implemented 80%. In the character of communicative/friendly with its indicators, the character of discipline with its indicators, as well as the character of responsible with its indicators, generally at the first meeting, they were not yet visible because the students had not shown the initial signs of behavior/character outlined in the indicators. Furthermore, at meetings 2, 3, and 4, the expected characters began to be visible and to develop, characterized by the students' responses that showed various signs of behaviors/characters stated in the indicators and began to be consistent. Thus, to apply the Character-based Individualized Learning model in teaching and learning process, serious efforts of educators are needed. Educators/teachers should familiarize themselves to develop a learning program oriented to learners, not to the material or themselves so that children can develop the expected characters optimally.

VI. Conclusion

Individualized Learning Program (ILP) is a model of curriculum adjustment form issued by the government to answer the needs of children with special needs, and is a learning program that is tailored to individual needs with different material contents from groups in classroom and that is implemented in a classical setting. Either individually or in groups, education through learning programs in schools must be able to produce beings who have noble character, in addition to having sufficient academic abilities and skills. Students with special needs at SMPN 19 Ambon need this program as a learning model that can accommodate their learning needs so that their potential can be channeled and developed properly as expected.

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