Companion Teacher Based on Sociological Stimulus during Learning to Improves the Acceptance of Inclusive Education Pupils in Receiving Skills and Information

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> *Abstract*---This study aims to reveal about the acceptance of pupils in the skills and information learn done by teachers with companion teachers during teaching and learning sessions (T&L) to inclusive learning disability (LD) pupils. This study also aims to understand the specific characteristics of the pupils' learning styles based on their tendency to learn and the ability to process new information. This study is a case study using qualitative data to answer the questions stated. Researchers used the Dunn and Dunn Model as a guide in analyzing observational data of sociological stimuli in a learning style supported by video recordings, field notes, interviews, and analysis of student work outcomes. 6 participants were purposefully selected for this study among teachers, pupils, and parents. To identify individual learning style stimuli, observations on the behaviors exhibited by pupils along with the quality of learning and achievement outcomes recorded during the T&L process or after the T&L process. During the T&L process, characteristics or behaviors that reflect certain tendencies or elements of learning styles that exist in pupils will be assessed. Findings show that the stimulus of sociological learning style that is adjacent or next-to-pupils by teachers encourage or stimulate student learning. In conclusion, besides good strategies, learning style as an indicator of learning and achievement that

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improves the quality of student information reception in T&L. Therefore, these findings unravel the relationship between learning styles and student learning effects that need to be given attention by educators to meet the teaching and the way of student learning.

Keywords---companion teacher, inclusive education, sociological stimulus.

Introduction

Companion teachers are teachers who accompany children with special needs while studying in class. They bridge the given by the class teacher with the pupils so that the child understands the information conveyed by the class teacher and teaching and learning process activities run smoothly (Husni, 2020). According to Husni (2020), they are also known as shadow teachers. As companion teachers, they must have sufficient knowledge broad in dealing with children with special needs, therefore, it is not uncommon for them to act as companion teachers (Husni, 2020). Inclusive education involves PLD studying together with normal pupils. In inclusive education, accompanying teachers are teachers who have knowledge and expertise in the field of children with special needs and have a duty to help or cooperate with another teacher in creating inclusive learning. Thus, a teacher with high competence helps pupils with learning disabilities (LD) acquire the necessary skills and knowledge (Bishara, 2019).

Teachers who accompany children as companion teachers are considered to have implemented a sociological stimulus of the adult element in Dunn and Dunn's learning styles to their pupils. Learning style stimuli involve things that will motivate or stimulate student learning. The stimulus is a large part made up of small elements and features. Dunn & Dunn (1992), categorize stimuli into five overall parts namely environmental, emotional, sociological, physical, and psychological. In this study, emphasis is on sociological stimuli in learning styles to analyze data. The sociological stimulus of the adult element is one of the learning styles that allows certain pupils to receive knowledge and skills well (Nawi et al., 2012; Hussin, 2017; Roesler, 2017).

Teachers in schools still need appropriate modules to understand and practice learning methods and techniques to meet the needs of PLD learning. So far a specific model for companion techniques has been studied by Husin et al. (2016). The model is suitable for pupils with learning difficulties (PLD) that allows teachers to receive critical exposure with learning style-based approaches. The previous study also found that teachers were less familiar with the T&L operations through pupils' learning styles (Husin et al., 2016). Therefore, a technique is needed based on sociological stimulus during learning to improves the acceptance of inclusive education pupils in receiving skills and information.

From a pedagogical point of view, learning style is considered as learning that is related to the constructivist approach. The meaning of constructivist learning is learning that obtains information through constructs that exist in an individual's mind. The relationship of learning style with constructivist learning theory is

related to learning that uses the right brain or the left brain (Yusoff et al., 2011; Alias & Siraj, 2012; Cassidy, 2004). According to constructive understanding, a person's abilities are different in terms of the use of the left brain and the right brain. Such differences make one's self global or analytical. Stimulus Psychology Dunn and Dunn's Learning Style Model has a global and analytical element. The two elements have very wide gaps. The characteristics of global student learning styles are in contrast to the characteristics of analytical student learning styles. Adjacent is a learning style of the analytical element and also in sociological stimuli (Isotani & Brandão, 2013; Malaysia, 2012; La Lopa, 2013).

Pupils who are in inclusive classes are pupils in the category of moderate learning disabilities and different from pupils with severe Learning Disabilities (Kelly & Norwich, 2013). Students with high functional learning disabilities are students in the Special Education class who are eligible to receive a semi-inclusive or fully inclusive program. Based on Husin et al.'s (2016), Study those who are meant to be semi-inclusive are students who receive education in some subjects together with mainstream program students on their ability. This study focuses on teachers, whether classroom teachers or companion teachers who deliver lessons to inclusive students. This study looks at the appropriate techniques presented by teachers that facilitate the student's acceptance of the lessons presented (Ab Rahman et al., 2014; Caviglia & Delfino, 2016).

Ausubel (1968), developed Piaget's idea of the effectiveness of information by stating that pupils should be allowed to carry out activities to give meaning to the information that has been processed either through the process of assimilation or accommodation. Pupils are encouraged to provide examples relevant to their life experiences. In this regard, Lock (1990), suggests the use of examples of current events to facilitate pupils to give meaning to information. Meaningful information is more easily generated through experiences that result from interaction with the environment (McCarthy & Raphael, 1992; Mitchell, 1992; Nias & Groundwater-Smith, 1988). Therefore, pupils need to be free to interact with the environment to add to the experience and make it easier for them to make connections with the things learned in the classroom (Seligman, 2000). Some pupils constantly relate their experiences as the learning process takes place. Active PLD often throw ideas based on their own experiences for discussion (Husin et al., 2011). Based on Felder Silverman's model of active stimuli, individuals or pupils of the active type like to learn in groups when each member takes turns explaining different topics. They like to formulate questions to be asked and try to answer on their own (Mohamad & Hasyim, 2010).

In addition to the sociological stimulus element, there is a structural element in PLD. According to Dunn & Dunn (1992), pupils who possess the structural element will feel best when told what to do, how to start something, and the time allocation required. One study revealed that student assessment is reliable and valid for measuring the function of dynamic model teachers including structured teacher behavior (Kyriakides et al., 2014). PLD also have the opportunity to succeed when their potential is polished by teachers through the transformation of education. A study by Husin et al. (2016), found that companion teachers have met the way of effective learning for pupils. Teachers should be prepared with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to implement the transformation. The

purpose of this study is to understand the specific characteristics of companion teachers implementing teaching and learning sessions (T&L) that meet the pupils' learning styles through accompanying techniques (Todorovic et al., 2011; Marimuthu & Cheong, 2015). The learning style is the pupils' tendency to learn and their ability to process new information (Konovalenko et al., 2021; Danchikov et al., 2012).

Method

The study used a qualitative approach of case study that involved interviews, observations, and analysis of documents of pupils' work. Interviews, observations, and data were collected using either interview protocols, observation forms, audit trail notes, video recorders, or pupils' work (Laguzzi et al., 2013; Levi et al., 2013; Ishak, 2006). Triangulation was conducted by the researcher to obtain accurate and saturated information. Triangulation was made as one of the case study methods, namely observation, interview, and analysis of documents of pupils' work. The PLD learning analysis was carried out using Nvivo software that determined the findings of the study (Homayouni et al., 2009; Andersson et al., 2016).

The participants of this study consisted of four teachers, two Special Education pupils in two selected schools in Perak, and two parents. The selection of the research participants was based on purposive sampling that met the specific criteria determined by the researcher. The specific criteria were based on research issues to be studied in depth to ensure the right choice of participants (Yin, 2003; Burns & Bursn, 2000). The participants of this study were among teachers who taught semi-inclusive students who received education in some subjects along with mainstream program students on their ability, the students of semi-inclusive students who received education in some subjects along with mainstream program pupils on their ability as well as the mothers of the pupils.

In short, the methodology suitable for this study was the qualitative approach of the case study. In the early stage of this study, the participants of the study were chosen based on the criteria determined (Swanson & Smalheiser, 1997; Hartley & Poeppel, 2020). At the same time, the interview protocols, and observation forms were prepared as well as audit trail notes, video recorders before the researcher was ready to conduct the fieldwork. Those interview protocols and observation forms were validated first by experts. During the interviews and observations conducted, the pupils' work was also studied to compare with the data of the interviews and observations (Zulfija et al., 2013; Michailakis & Reich, 2009). The data were analyzed after each fieldwork. The process was carried out continuously until the data were saturated. In the end, the researcher concluded all data collected was based on saturated themes. All those data were analyzed using Nvivo software that determined the findings of the study (Chou et al., 2003; Xu & Brown, 2016; Clarke, 2006).

The main method in this study was an interview. The interviews conducted with participants for this study required appropriate protocols. The protocols of this study contained the components proposed by Kidder & Lamb (1981), and Lebar (2009). The data were obtained using data collection tools such as interview

protocols and observation forms. The interviews and observations were analyzed qualitatively. Qualitative analysis using Nvivo software was carried out to get the themes to answer the research questions.

To fulfill the validity of constructs, evidence was obtained from various sources of interviews, direct observations, and video recordings (Edwards, 2016; Ehrman & Leaver, 2003; Lee, 2011). All the data collection methods were analyzed to ensure that there was a string of strong evidence. To obtain the internal validity of this research, the findings were verified by field experts which included Special Education and Psychology. Meanwhile, for the external validity, the researcher had to compare the findings with the existing theories, analyzing the similarities and the differences between the findings of this study and the second party to enable the study findings to be assessed to what extent it can work and function in a second-party situation (Yin, 2009).

Results

Below are summaries of the analyses of the companion teacher based on sociological stimulus during learning to improves the acceptance of inclusive education pupils in receiving skills and information (Foroutan et al., 2013; Niemi & Multisilta, 2016).

More to individual learning/ 2-3 pupils for most activities

The side-by-side approach is more to individual teaching when PLD need to understand a new concept or term. Hazim likes to be accompanied by teachers when activities are on the whiteboard (TS2: 027). Farzana, on the other hand, needs the guidance of a teacher to complete the movement in prayer. The accompaniment is performed by the teacher during the prayer practice as follows;

> *(PBPBTT: SS/BERDAMPINGAN/PERGERAKAN) ".. the teacher practices the dawn prayer for two rak'ahs. Farzana performs correctly. However, Farzana needs the teacher's guidance to correct the movement which is quite difficult to do perfectly, that is bowing correctly." (P2S1:OS1:025)*

Side by side and stay close to pupils especially in kinesthetic activities

An example of guidance in remembering facts was the teacher has guided his pupils to write the names of angels on paper divided into five parts. The teacher has guided the ways to divide the paper into five parts by being close to the pupils (P2S1 RVS1: 014). For other learning activities, the teacher guides MBPBTT to perform the practice of prayer correctly by being close to the pupils, as follows;

> *(PBPBTT: SS/DEWASA/BERDAMPINGAN): "The teacher is near the student and corrects mistakes did by pupils such as the position of the student's feet while sitting between two prostrations during prayer practice." (P1S2 RVS2: 052).*

Facing for most activities

Close-Face-to-face teaching in this sociological stimulus involves several learning activities such as pronunciation skills, clue questions and, discussion activities,

and explaining. An example of pronunciation skill activity is reciting makhraj guided with the Iqra' module, as follows;

> *(PBPBTT: SS/BERDAMPINGAN/BACAAN) "Azam still does not master the pronunciation of' gha '. The teacher sitting next to him shows the difference between 'gha' and 'ra'. Azam can pronounce 'gha' correctly. The teacher repeats the pronunciation of 'gha' over and over again. Then the teacher shows an example of saying the words 'maghadhi' and 'magharib'. By side and facing each other, Azam can finally pronounce the letters correctly." (P1S2 OS1: 050).*

As well for the activities of clue questions in identifying things that confuse pupils such as the number of dots on letters, discussion and giving explanation activities in questioning and answering, mainly about certain concepts and terms. In the beginning, teachers have to provide more assistance to strengthen knowledge and skills (Ahmad et al., 2016; Ghani & Ahmad, 2011; Hasim, 2011). But in the end, in all activities, teachers have to let pupils do their activities.

The acceptance of pupils in the skills and information learn done in adjacent

Based on the saturated data which when the contiguous techniques are implemented in T&L by teachers, mostly pupils get a positive effect on things as stated below;

- Able to avoid confusion with the concept, pronunciation skills, and appropriate actions
- Maintain concentration
- Effective and faster to learn
- Fun to learn with their way

Discussion and Recommendations

This study on the learning styles mentioned above is based on one particular subject only. Dunn (1989), found that most pupils with learning difficulties will engage in tactical, kinaesthetic, and global groups based on the stimuli present in the Dunn and Dunn learning style model. But this study found that these sociological techniques are an element in analytics groups and not from global groups. Wamba & Dunn (2009), suggest appropriate learning to them through aids material, game and other strategy-based that meets their strengths. Ausubel (1968) developed Piaget's idea of the effectiveness of information by stating that pupils should be allowed to carry out activities to give meaning to the information that has been processed either through the process of assimilation or accommodation. Pupils are encouraged to provide examples relevant to their life experiences. In this regard, Lock (1990), suggests the use of examples of current events to facilitate pupils to give meaning to information. Meaningful information is more easily generated through experiences that result from interaction with the environment (McCarthy & Raphael, 1992; Mitchell, 1992; Nias & Groundwater-Smith, 1988). Therefore, pupils need to be free to interact with the environment to add to the experience and make it easier for them to make connections with the things learned in the classroom (Seligman, 2000). Some pupils constantly relate their experiences as the learning process takes place. Active PLD often throw

ideas based on their own experiences for discussion (Husin et al., 2011). Based on Felder Silverman's model of active stimuli, individuals or pupils of the active type like to learn in groups when each member takes turns explaining different topics. They like to formulate questions to be asked and try to answer on their own (Mohamad & Hasyim, 2010). All these past studies are in line with the findings of this study through techniques of the sociological elements that have been discussed in the findings. One study revealed that student assessment is reliable and valid for measuring the function of dynamic model teachers including structured teacher behavior (Kyriakides et al., 2014). Structured teacher behavior can be worked through the practice used by teachers through appropriate modules as an option to meet the learning needs of PLD (Hardaker, 2012; Hwang et al., 2013; Sze, 2009).

Conclusion

This paper presents companion teachers based on sociological stimulus during learning to improves the acceptance of inclusive education pupils in receiving skills and information. Based on the study it can be concluded that these sociological stimuli involve certain pupils receiving the skills and information learned very well when the teacher is adjacent to them compare to teach on stage by teachers (Lin et al., 2013; Schmidt & Čreslovnik, 2010). Based on the findings of the adjacent procedure that should be done with using supporting materials are individual learning or 2-3 pupils for most activities, side by side and stay close to pupils especially in kinesthetic activities, facing for most activities that is pronunciation skill, clue questions and, discussion activities and explaining (Subramaniam et al., 2013; Yin, 2011; Yin, 1994; Zhang & Sternberg, 2005). For the beginning of implementation, teachers have to assist to strengthen knowledge and skills. But otherwise, in the end, teachers have to let pupils do their activities.

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