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Improved Ability to Recognize Letters Through Flashcard Media With Maximization Memory for Children With Autistic Special Needs

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ABSTRACT

Generally, the difficulties experienced by autistic children are basic academic abilities, namely reading, writing, and arithmetic. Autistic children often experience attention disorders so that in the learning process children are easily bored to learn. Therefore, learning media is needed that can make children excited about learning. The Flashcard media program is carried out by focusing on strengthening memory at the beginning, according to Rasto's theory, the initial stage of beginner reading is to use Visual Memory. Muses single-subject research with the form of A-B-A program design. Basedon the results of the program, the use of Flashcards with memory maximization methods can help children recognize letters as a basic step to meet the first stage in beginner reading With the pretest that originally could only spell 2 letters, after intervening against the increase to 9 letters at the time of posttest.

Keywords: Flashcard; Recognizing Letters; Autistic.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children with special needs are different from the average normal child, and to learn effectively requires special programs, services, facilities, and materials (Gearheart, 1981 in Eva, 2015). There are obstacles for children with special needs in education at school and daily life in the community. Ormrod (2008) explained that children with special needs (ABK) are divided into four groups. Among them are children who experience cognitive or special academic barriers, children who experience delays in cognitive and social functioning, children with high cognitive development, and children who experience social or behavioral problems.

Autistic children belong to the group of children who experience social or behavioral problems. Although autistic children have barriers to thinking abstractly, there are opportunities to learn as perceived by children in general. Therefore, teaching staff should have creative abilities to support the problems faced by children in their education, namely learning problems. In general, the form of difficulty experienced by autistic children is basic academic skills, namely reading, writing, and arithmetic. Autistic children also often experience attention disorders, namely easily switching attention and lack concentration or lack enthusiasm for learning. So that when in the learning process children are easily bored to learn.

Therefore, learning tools or media are needed that are able to make children excited to learn. Based on the results of the assessment conducted from February 7 to February 15 at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan, there are some of them who have not been able to perform basic academic abilities properly. Some of them point out that some learners have the ability to write beginnings still in the stage of patterning or following the lines of the dots that educators make, even the result of making the pattern follow the lines of the dots is not completely smooth and often deviates from the lines, not infrequently also does not match the pattern in patterning letters. Students also cannot read and even experience obstacles in remembering the letters of the alphabet.

Meanwhile, basic academic ability is something that is very important for students to achieve academic achievement in school. The delay in basic abilities is caused by frequent attention disorders, namely easily switching attention and lack of concentration or lack of enthusiasm for learning. So that when in the learning process children are easily bored to learn and do not really understand the material given.

Based on Rasto's theory of early reading, Subjects with the initials MNR are constrained in the first stage commonly called Visual Memory (VM). It can be said that because the Subject is still confused in terms of learning, the Subject has not been able to recognize the letters of the alphabet and has not been able to name letters without being appointed independently. In accordance with the observations made, the subject lacks focus control in the learning process. This phenomenon is thought to be the undevelopment of the subject's ability to learn basic abilities, especially alphabetic letter recognition, so that he seems to have difficulty in terms of recognizing letters.

Using Flashcards can improve students' vocabulary skills, because Flashcards can attract students' attention, make students motivated and focused on learning vocabulary (Nugroho, et al 2012). Intense learning with Flashcard media is expected to provide more value to students to improve letter recognition. The program using Flashcard media is of course done by focusing on strengthening memory at the beginning, in accordance with Rasto's theory, the initial stage of beginner reading is to use Visual Memory.

Early stage maximization is supported by a theory proposed by Richard Hish from the University Mc Gill which was later cited by Abdul Rahman Shaleh (2009), mentioning that skill memory is not an attempt at remembering but the result of repeated exercises. This phenomenon is the same as rote repetition for tahfidz that to strengthen memory is to repeat many times what has been memorized before it is constantly repeating and learning. It is hoped that with continuous repetition of the alphabet letters, it can form Visual Memory for children with autistic special needs who mostly have mental retardation.

2. METHOD

The approach used in this study is a quantitative approach intended to determine the improvement of letter recognition ability in Baseline 1 (A1) and Baseline 2 (A2) in autistic students through Flashcard media. This type of research is a Single Subject Research (SSR) research, which is to determine the improvement of the ability to recognize the letters of middle-class autistic students at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan through Flashcard media. Research variables are everything that is set by the researcher to be studied and researched so that information about it is obtained. In this study, there was one variable studied, namely "the ability to recognize letters." The ability to recognize letters is the stage at which the child learns to recognize letters and sounds from the context (from the language used). That is, recognizing letters is an activity that involves two elements, namely: audictive (auditory) and visual (observation) elements, with the use of Flashcard media.

This study used the A-B-A design form, because the design showed a stronger influence on free variables compared to the A-B design. in this case, the researcher used the A-B-A design with a percentage measurement unit, which in its implementation was carried out 11 meetings (sessions) which were divided into 2 meetings for assessment, 3 meetings for baseline 1, 3 meetings for the implementation of interventions and 3 meetings for baseline 2. This A-B-A design shows a stronger causal relationship than the A-B design. The data collection technique used in this program is the checklist technique. This checklist technique is intended to collect data on students' ability to recognize letters. The subject of this study was an autistic student of Middle Class IX at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan, with the initials MNR, male.

3. RESULT

The steps in analyzing the data are as follows:
1. Calculate the score on each condition
2. Create a table with measurement results on each condition
3. Make the results of data analysis under conditions and between conditions to find out the desired influence (target behavior). The data on the ability to recognize letters in MNR subjects under baseline conditions 1 (A1), intervention (B), baseline 2 (A2) are as follows:

1. **Baseline 1 (A1)**

Voice	Maximum Score	Shoes	Value
1	26	2	7,69
2	26	2	7,69
3	26	2	7,69

Tendency to Stability in Conditions
Baseline 1 (A1) Letter Recognition Ability

2. **Intervention (B)**

Voice	Maximum Score	Shoes	Value
4	26	2	7,69
5	26	5	19,23
6	26	9	34,61

Tendency to Stability in Conditions
Intervention (B) Ability to Recognize Letters

3. **Baseline 2 (A2)**

Voice	Maximum Score	Shoes	Value
7	26	5	19,23
8	26	9	34,61
9	26	9	34,61

Tendency to Stability in Conditions
Baseline 2 (A2) Letter Recognition Ability

4. DISCUSSION

The ability to recognize letters is a part that must be mastered as a basis for beginner reading that every intermediate grade student should already have. The problem in this study is that there are middle class IX students at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan, namely experiencing children experiencing obstacles in recognizing letters. It is this condition that is found in the field so that it can be taken about this issue. This study used Flashcard media, chosen as one of the ways that can have a positive influence in improving letter recognition skills in autistic students.

The study was conducted for one month with the number of meetings Nine sessions were divided into three conditions, namely three sessions for conditions before treatment (baseline 1 (A1)), three sessions for conditions when given treatment (intervention (B)), and three sessions for conditions after treatment (baseline 2(A2)). Based on the results of research that has been carried out, the provision of interventions can improve the ability to recognize letters. This is shown by a significant improvement in the ability to recognize letters before and after treatment. Baseline 1 A1 consists of three sessions because the data obtained is stable. This means that the data from the first session to the third session are equal or fixed and fall into the stable category based on the stability criteria that have been set, so that it can proceed to the intervention, in addition to which the researcher takes three sessions to ensure accurate data acquisition. The first session of the fourth session has the same value, but the process to get the value is different.

In intervention (B) treated with three sessions, the ability to recognize the letter of the MNR subject on the intervention condition (B) from the fourth to the sixth session was improved. This can happen because it is given treatment using Flashcard media so that the ability to recognize the letters of the MNR subject has increased, this is also because Flashcard media attracts the attention of the subject and also prefers to learn while playing and singing. Meanwhile, in baseline condition 2 (A2) the value obtained by the child appeared to decrease in the seventh session but in the eighth to ninth session it increased, but

overall the condition was better when compared to baseline 1 (A1).

The achievement of these positive results is partly because Flashcard media has characteristics that are in accordance with the learning expectations of autistic students, namely the principle of concreteness.

5. CONCLUSION

a. The ability to recognize the huruf of autistic students in middle class IX at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan before being given treatment is still very low based on the results of the analysis under conditions at baseline 1 A1 (before being given treatment).

b. The ability to recognize the letters of autistic students during treatment has increased judging from the results of the analysis under conditions of the intervention (during treatment).

c. The ability to recognize the letter of autistic students safter being given treatment increased judging from the results of the analysis under conditions at baseline 2A2 (after treatment).

d. The ability to recognize letters of autistic students based on the results of the analysis between conditions, namely in conditions before treatment (baseline 1 (A1)) students' abilities are still low to increase in conditions during treatment (intervention) and in conditions during treatment (intervention) children's abilities increase after treatment (baseline 2 (A2)) in autistic students of middle class IX at SLB Muhammadiyah Lamongan.

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