Teachers’ Strategies In ELT For Students With Disabilities

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Abstract: This research is aimed at identifying the teachers’ strategies in ELT for students with disabilities. This research is descriptive qualitative research as the data is in the word form. The data were collected through interview. The interview guidelines consisted of semi-structured questions. The researchers interviewed the participants based on the interview guidelines and some questions that can appear in the interview process. The interview questions were designed to focus on the teachers’ teaching strategies in ELT that usually used in their classrooms. The researchers investigated two teachers of one special school in Bantul. One of the teachers teaches mentally disabled students and the other teaches deaf students. Both of the teachers have more than ten years experiences in teaching students with disabilities. The result of this research shows that there are several strategies applied by the teachers in teaching English for students with disabilities. The strategies are: repeating the material, giving examples, using song, giving reward, explaining the subject matter, using flashcard and asking the students to colour the pictures.

Index Terms: teachers, strategies, students, disabilities, subject matter, flashcard, colour pictures

1. Introduction

Everyone has the same right [1] and opportunity to get a qualified education [2]. It includes everyone, no matter his religion, wealth [3], ethnicity, and ability. Students with disabilities need to get special services in the educational system that appropriate with their circumstances [4]. Children with disabilities need additional support such as special schools and pedagogical methods, including suitable teaching strategies for the students with disabilities [5]. Mastering vocabulary [6] is one of the crucial parts of learning the English language in schools. The Indonesian government has decided that English becomes a language that must be learned by all students. It means that there is no exception for learning students even for the students with disabilities. Teachers in special schools should have appropriate strategies in teaching English vocabulary for their students. Strategies that suit the students will help them develop the vocabulary in the class. According to Peavler [7], it is essential to know and understand that differences between the students’ learning styles in order to help the students learn and study. Hence, the teacher should choose the most suitable strategy that can be applied in a class full of different characteristics of the students. The researchers provided this research to find out the strategies used by two teachers from two groups of students with different disabilities in developing English vocabulary. The researchers limited the problem of this teacher by only choosing two teachers who are senior in the school as they already taught students with disabilities in more than ten years. Some future researches can be the follow up of this research such as comparing the teachers’ strategies in ELT for students with disabilities in the other special schools. Another research is that the research can be deeper research by doing Class Action Research (CAR). This research was expected to be valuable information for those who are involved in English language for students with disabilities.

2. Literature review

Disabilities can be temporary, relapsing, or long-term. Students may have disabilities that are more or less obvious. Teachers may not know that a student has a disability unless he chooses to reveal or an incident arises. These “hidden” disabilities can be hard for students to reveal because many people guess they are healthy because “they look fine.” In some situations, the student may make an apparently strange demand or act that is disability-related. For example, a student may ask to note the lectures because he has dyslexia and he takes longer time to transcribe the materials [8]. Teaching strategy is a method used by the teacher to transfer the knowledge to the students. Teaching strategies help the students in learning. There might be a lot of strategies that can be used to teach students but not all strategies suit the students. Teaching strategies help the teachers in identifying the different available learning methods of the students to develop their learning skills. It is because there is no single strategy that can warranty better student results [9]. Hence, the teachers should be creative in creating the teaching strategies [10]. All teaching strategies are designed to dedicate in structure, engagement, purpose, and response. The one that makes them different is the styles that are described in the figure below [11]:

![Figure 1. Teaching strategies styles](image-url)

2.1 Problem statements

Problem statement of the study can be stated as follows:

What are the Teachers’ Strategies in ELT for Students with Disabilities?

2.2 The objective of the study

The objective of the study can be stated as follows:

To identify the teachers’ strategies in ELT for students with disabilities.

3. Method

The type of this research is descriptive qualitative research. Aurora and Stoner [12] affirm that by using qualitative methodology, researchers can collect detailed
information. Ary, et al [13] declare that qualitative deals with data that are in the form of words. The researchers used interview as the instrument. The researchers interviewed the participants based on the interview guidelines. The questions focused on the teachers’ teaching strategies used in classrooms. The researchers analyze the interview’s results (Besley & Roberts [14]) to analyse the strategies used by both teachers in teaching English from two groups of students with different disabilities. The participants are two teachers from one of special school in Bantul. One of the teachers teaches a group of mentally disabled students, and the other teacher teaches a group of deaf students. Both of the teachers have more than ten years experiences in teaching students with disabilities.

4. Discussion
The researchers had collected the data from interviewing two teachers from two groups of students with different disabilities. The findings found by the researchers are about the strategies used by the teachers in ELT for students with different disabilities: mentally disabled and deaf students. The findings will be discussed below:

**TABLE 1.**
**TEACHER’S STRATEGIES IN ELT FOR MENTALLY DISABLED STUDENTS**

<table>
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**Table 2. Teacher’s strategies in ELT for deaf students**

<table>
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<td>1. Explaining the subject matter</td>
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4.1 The Teachers’ Strategies in ELT for Mentally Disabled Students

4.1.1 Repeating the material
Mentally disabled students may have different ability to remember and understand the material taught by the teacher. Hence, repeating the material is one of the best way to remind and review the material taught before. Repeating the material for the mentally disabled students might be a boring activity for the teacher as he should repeat the same material over and over again, but this will help the students so much in gaining the idea why they should learn English, why the teacher repeat the material over and over again. Even that the teacher has no idea how many times the repetition should be done, but if the teacher thinks that the repetition he has done is enough that he can possibly go to the next material.

4.1.2 Giving examples
One of the strategies used by the teacher of mentally disabled students is by giving examples to them. Some students might be confused, Adam [15] expresses that teachers should start off the activity by checking and giving example to make sure they understand the material and know what they are doing. This is the primary teaching activity even for regular students. Writing down the subject matter or in this case is the English vocabulary is the easiest way to teach the mentally disabled students. The students will follow the teacher by also writing down the words on their books. If the word is easy to draw, the teacher then draws the objects (words) on the blackboard, too. This is so much easier to understand the words for the students. Another way of giving an example is to speak up the words. The teacher speaks aloud the words and the students will follow the teacher. This indirectly teaches the students how to pronounce the words correctly. It is important in giving the students the opportunity to be successful in learning a language. After giving examples, the teacher can give task to the students to know their improvement after learning the material given.

4.1.3 Using songs
In language development, song take an important role as a flexible resource that usually used by teacher. The repetition of words in every song helps students to absorb and reproduce the language easily. Nagy et al [16] shows that when songs are used properly, it can be an amazing and powerful when someone is learning a new language. This using song strategy is helpful for the teacher to teach English language vocabulary for mentally disabled students. The students want more fun in any teaching and learning process; a song can give the students the joyfulness in learning English language vocabulary. Shin in Dzanic & Pejic [17] believes that songs are beneficial teaching supports which increase and keep students’ motivation, especially in some situations when they are attractive and reinforced with colorful visuals, realia (objects from real life used in classroom instruction), and movement. These supplements add additional sensory and visual input which in turn enhance learning.

4.1.4 Giving rewards
Hidayati [18] believes that teachers may consider games as fun activities that might be a useful strategy in teaching vocabulary in the English Language Teaching (ELT). Games are helpful because they offer situations that give students chances to engage and participate in real communication. Teachers can use games to portray and check new knowledge, vocabulary, and grammar and are are good teaching instruments that can be used to widen students’ language learning. The winner of this game can be awarded by applause or snack that can motivate the students to learn more and be more active in class.

4.2 The Teachers’ Strategies in ELT for Deaf Students

4.2.1 Explaining the subject matters
Explaining is the other strategy that is easier to do for the teacher in teaching English. For the deaf students, explaining is done by the teacher by writing down the words on the blackboard. As the deaf students have a listening problem that related to their speaking problem, the teacher explains by speaking aloud the words by clear lips movements. This is also practising the remaining listening and speaking ability of the students that they might listen
and speak out a few words. This is a kind of treatment for deaf students.

4.2.2 Using flashcards
Teachers need to use media in order to make teaching situation to be active. The teacher has to improve the students with disability's vocabulary in active learning by suitable media such as flashcards. Flashcards are sets of cards that give information. It usually has a picture and a word or information on the other side [19]. Budden [20] testifies that flashcard can be bright and colourful and make a real impact on visual students. Flashcards may facilitate the students with disability to improve their vocabulary. Cross in Habibi [21] notes that flashcard is a picture on a piece of card or paper, which is probably the most widely visual aids in language teaching. It is used as a personal dictionary for students with a disability that can improve their vocabulary. The picture of flashcard has a lot of varieties group, for example group of pictures animal, vegetables, numbers, part of body, transportation. Rahmasari [22] utters that by showing the flashcards, the students could memorize the word better because they know the actual things of the words which are new for them. Flashcards also can be the instrument to play a game. This learning strategy is expected to make the students with disability in the classroom more active, enjoy and motivated in learning English process.

4.2.3 Asking the students to colour the pictures
Deaf students are like the other normal students. They like colors and pictures [23]. Deaf students personally would like learning materials in school with real object that they can see. Conversation among the teachers and the deaf students may take too much time in teaching and learning process. Hence, with the help of real objects, colours, and pictures, the students would be able to get engaged or motivated quickly in class during the teaching and learning process. In teaching English, the teacher of deaf students used pictures to engage the students to learn English together in class [24]. By giving pictures that full of colors, the students will focus on the material explain by the teacher. Even that the students may only interested on the pictures, not in the explanation by the teacher, teacher can do some learning contract to the students. The students are able to color the pictures after all the material has been taught and learnt and the students are able to answer the questions asked by the teacher. After doing the teaching and learning activity, coloring can be started by the students as the reward after following the lesson. Davis [25] states that colouring requires good concentration and. This type of concentrating on one task can help a child develop his overall concentration levels. It is because when students enjoy on one activity, they will sit and focused. The students can learn the words together with colouring the pictures.

5. Conclusion
It is important for teachers to have good strategies in teaching processes. The teaching strategies for normal and students with disabilities are different. Students with disability need special teaching strategies. Not all teaching strategies suit them. Teaching strategies can be suitable for students after the teachers know their students’ needs and abilities.

6. Acknowledgment
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References


