

CHAPTER IV

RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION

A. Description of Research Object

1. Historical Overview Of School

Sekolah Luar Biasa (SLB) Negeri Pati is one of the schools intended for children with disabilities. Initially, this education unit was only SDLB. SDLB was established through a government program, namely an Inpres elementary school which aims to complete education for children with disabilities.

In the first year this school was established, the number of students was still not optimal. Because there is no awareness of parents to register children who have special needs in school. In the end, the school took action by visiting every house that has children with special needs with the help of village officials. After conducting home visits, only 13 students were caught. Under the direction of the Education and Culture Office of the Margerejo sub-district, the thirteen students were handled by four SLB teachers, namely Mr. Edy Muryanto, Mr. Sugito, Mr. Prawoto, and Mr. Nor Fathoni without the school principal.

After one year, the number of students enrolling in special schools has increased. So that on July 1, 1984, SLB N Pati was inaugurated by the Pati regent. During the teaching and learning process, many encountered obstacles that hindered the course of learning. This is due to a lack of teaching staff and schools that do not have the same capacity as special schools. Finally, based on the 12-year compulsory education law and the decree of the head of the Central Java province education and culture office, in October 2015 the special elementary school (SDLB) was converted into a *Sekolah Luar Biasa* (SLB) which houses the special elementary school (SDLB), special junior high school (SMPLB) and special high school (SMALB).¹

2. Geographical Location

SLB N Pati is located on Jalan Seodiono, Sukoharjo Village, Margerejo District, and Pati Regency. Having a strategic location gives advantages to this school. Easy road access for two-wheeled and four-wheeled vehicles makes it easier for parents to access the road to school. The SLBN Pati is located next to the SLB Bina

¹ Document of The Historical Overview of SLB N Pati by Reseacher, January 11th, 2023.

Citra. Being in a village environment and the educational complex provides a comfortable atmosphere for teaching and learning activities.²

3. Vision And Mission Of The School

a. Vision

The vision of SLB N Pati is as follows:

To form the personality of students who are superior in achievement, virtuous, faithful, pious and independent.

b. Mission

In line with the school's vision to form superior students, the school's mission is as follows:

- 1) To form students who believe and fear God Almighty.
- 2) Growing the spirit of excellence, reliability and exemplary.
- 3) Carry out active, creative, innovative, effective and fun learning.
- 4) Improving achievements in academics, science and technology, arts, culture and sports.
- 5) Foster good manners in society.
- 6) Expanding opportunities to obtain education for children with disabilities.³

4. Teachers and Students' Data of SLB N Pati

a. Teachers

Teachers have the meaning as members of society who devote themselves to support the implementation of education. Teachers are an important element in the course of a process of learning activities. The ability of teachers in teaching can influence learning interest and student achievement. Teachers at SLB N Pati have different educational backgrounds. The number of teachers at SLB N Pati in the 2022/2023 academic year has reached 71 teachers. There are several categories of teachers based on their employment status of teachers. There are 34 educators with PPK status, 23 teachers with Regional Honorary status in the Province and 14 PNS teachers.⁴

²Document of The Geographical Location of SLB N Pati by Reseacher, January 11th, 2023.

³Document of The Vision and Mission of SLB N Pati by Reseacher, January 11th, 2023.

⁴Document of The Teacher's Data of SLB N Pati by Reseacher, January 11th, 2023.

b. Students

The number of students at SLB N Pati for the 2022/2023 academic year reached 394 students with the number of students for category A totaling 14 students, Autism class with 4 students, class B with 88 students, class C totaling 279 students and class D totaling 6 students. Students are divided into 59 study groups. Class 1 consists of 36 students with 6 groups. Class 2 consists of 19 students with 4 groups. Class 3 consists of 26 students with 5 groups. Class 4 consists of 31 students with 5 groups. Grade 5 consists of 46 students with 6 groups. Grade 6 consists of 33 students with 5 groups. Grade 7 consists of 47 students with 6 groups. Grade 8 consists of 44 students with 5 groups. Class 9 consists of 10 with 5 groups. Class 10 consists of 31 students with 5 groups. Class 11 consists of 24 Students with 4 groups. Class 12 consists of 16 students with 3 groups.

In this study, the focus of the researchers was on category C disabilities. Category C was specifically for students with intellectual disabilities. Class C has the most number of students compared to other classes. There are 279 students in class C, so students in category C dominate more than other classes such as A, B, and D. This research focuses on SMPLB category C class 7C3.⁵

B. Research Findings

1. The Problem Faced by Teacher In Teaching English For Intellectual Disability

In this study, researchers directly observed the process of learning English for children with intellectual disabilities. In addition, researchers conducted interviews with an English teachers and school principals. As a reinforcement of the research results, the researchers documented the course of learning English for children with intellectual disabilities.

Researchers found that learning English encountered many obstacles. There are several problems faced by teachers when teaching children with intellectual disabilities, including the following:

⁵Document of The Student's Data of SLB N Pati by Reseacher, January 11th, 2023.

a. **The Impact of Curriculum Shift**

Based on the results of interviews with teachers, SMPLB has used the Merdeka curriculum. The Merdeka learning curriculum is included in the new curriculum category. So that teachers still experience problems with its application. Some of these obstacles include, teachers do not have experience in independent learning. Then, teachers have not been able to fully adopt this curriculum.

"Teachers have not been able to adopt a Merdeka learning curriculum because of the lack of independent learning experience and lack of references,"⁶

Limited references are an inhibiting factor in the implementation of the Merdeka curriculum in learning English. Textbooks circulating so far are still considered inadequate. Existing reference sources have not been able to assist teachers in obtaining references on how to facilitate students to get effective learning. Then, the lack of learning facilities for students hinders students in learning. Changing the curriculum to a Merdeka learning curriculum requires teachers to study again so it requires more time allocation. With this newly implemented policy change, teachers are expected to be able to keep up with the existing changes.

b. **The Problems from Attitudes and Behavior of Students**

1) **Lack of student's focus on learning**

Because of their special nature, teachers have difficulty attracting children's focus on learning. Children with intellectual disabilities have a low level of focus and even find it difficult to focus on certain objects. Sometimes it needs to be called repeatedly to get students to refocus. Even though the teacher is teaching in front of them, sometimes the focus of students is not on learning but on other things. Like normal children in general, they also like to chat and play with their friends during class hours.

"Attracting student focus is indeed quite difficult, when called upon students will refocus but after a few minutes, their focus is on something else. Sometimes

⁶ SM, The Principal, The Interview by The Researcher, transcript, January 12th, 2023.

they are very difficult to manage, starting from running around and talking as they please, said Miss Tari an English teacher".⁷

This is a challenge for the teacher, if the students' focus is not on learning, then how can they understand the material presented. Students with intellectual disabilities need extra attention in learning. To attract his attention, the teacher must have a special trick.

2) **Lack of Student Memory**

In contrast to normal children in general, children with intellectual disabilities have low concentration and memory. Experiencing disturbances in cognitive function causes individuals with intellectual disabilities to experience difficulties in capturing or receiving learning material.

"I often encounter difficulties when reviewing the material with students, because they forget so easily,"⁸ said Miss Tari as English teacher.

This low memory causes the teacher to repeat several times in each meeting. To remind the material taught in the previous meeting. So the teacher also has difficulty allocating time between reviewing material and giving new material. Moreover, the study time is very short. One hour the lesson only lasts 30 minutes.

3) **Difficult To Control Student's Emotions**

The unstable emotional level of students is one of the challenges for English teachers. Sometimes students' emotions can become obstacles during learning.

"As we know, they have emotions that go up and down. Sometimes they get angry, cry, and are not in the mood to study."⁹

Students with intellectual disabilities often experience anxiety because of certain things. They are easily

⁷ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview by The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

⁸ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview by The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023

⁹ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview by The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023

frightened and feel uncomfortable in situations that make them feel stressed. The excessive fear they feel can trigger uncontrolled emotions that can interfere with teaching and learning activities. When children with intellectual disabilities feel disturbed, they will get angry easily and do not want to learn. In some cases, when they feel uncomfortable at home, it will affect their emotions until the end of learning. If students' emotions cannot be controlled, the teacher is forced to send students home early.

4) **Lack of Student Motivation In Learning**

In addition to low memory, students with intellectual disabilities have less motivation to learn. Low learning motivation causes students with intellectual disabilities to pay less attention during teaching and learning activities.

"Students' interest in learning is lacking, and awareness of the importance of learning is very small, but they still want to take lessons well,"¹⁰.

Awareness of students with intellectual disabilities, on themselves to achieve success in learning is very minimal. Because these basic concepts are difficult to form, awareness of oneself and the environment seems to be far from being understood. In this case, the teacher has an important role to help students in increasing their learning motivation.

c. **The Problems from Materials**

1) **Difficulty In Selecting Materials**

Material that is easily absorbed by children with intellectual disabilities is the basic material. These basic materials, such as vocabulary and greetings. Vocabulary that is taught to students with intellectual disabilities is only about the basic vocabulary that they can encounter every day. The teacher takes vocabulary material from the smallest scope, namely the family sphere. The family scope consists of family members starting from father,

¹⁰ SM, The Principal, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 12th, 2023.

mother, brothers, sisters, and grandparents. As for other vocabulary material, such as objects that are around or in the classroom. For example tables, chairs, books, brooms, blackboards and the others. The selection of material is adjusted to the needs and capacities of students. The lack of students' comprehension in receiving lessons makes the teacher choose simple material. Giving material is not as much for normal children in general.

"It's better to be given a little material but students understand than a lot of material but no progress from students, because their way of thinking is slow, so I have to be selective in choosing which material is easy for students to absorb¹¹"

In this case, the teacher has difficulty choosing the appropriate material and generalizing material achievements between one student and other.

2) **Lack of English Skill**

The limitations of children with intellectual disabilities, cause not all skills in English can be mastered by students. English includes mastery of four skills listening, writing, reading and speaking. Each skill has obstacles in teaching and application.

For listening skills, the teacher has difficulty focusing students when listening lessons begin. Their focus is often divided, so students do not capture the listening material provided properly. Then, students still have difficulty in mastering writing skills. Teachers encounter many obstacles when teaching writing skills to students. Students still need the teacher's help in writing. Students still need direction and guidance from the teacher and must be given examples when writing. When they write, the words they write sometimes do not match what the teacher exemplifies. Then, the obstacles encountered when teaching reading to students with disabilities. In her interview, Miss Tari said that

¹¹SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

“Children with intellectual disabilities are very lazy to read. Just lazy to write let alone read. Some children don't know how to spell letters, this is what causes them to be slow in reading.”¹²

The last is mastery of speaking skills for students with intellectual disabilities. Deficiencies in speaking, cause the words spoken by students to often sound unclear and difficult to understand. This becomes an obstacle when learning to speak takes place. Even though they are superior in mastering this skill, the pronunciation of the words spoken is still unclear.

d. The Problems from Learning Models and Media

1) The Challenges Of Using The Learning Models

The learning model that is often applied in learning English for children with intellectual disabilities is direct instruction, question and answer. "So far, they can catch lessons easily through the question and answer learning model, for other learning models related to students' critical thinking they really can't"¹³.

During learning, this learning model is the most effective because the teacher has difficulty applying other learning models. Students with intellectual disabilities cannot study independently or use learning models such as discussions. They cannot think abstractly to solve a problem on their own. Therefore, not all learning models can be used. The teacher must sort out which learning model is appropriate and suitable so that the material being taught can be conveyed properly to students.

2) Lack of Learning media

Limitations of learning media for students at school become one of the obstacles in teaching and learning activities. Media that should be a support in the learning process is still not fully available. The minimal number of LCD projectors. The school only

¹² SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

¹³ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

has one detachable LCD. When the teacher wants to use the LCD, the teacher must reinstall it in class, so that it can reduce student-learning hours. Then there is no language lab.

"There is no language lab yet, the school is still trying to hasten the construction of a language lab"¹⁴.

Even though school facilities are not yet complete, this does not dampen the enthusiasm of teachers in delivering material to students. For other learning media, such as the use of sound when listening, the teacher takes the initiative to bring his own.

3) Lack of Learning resource

The thing that makes the difference, the main source of learning is books. However, children with disabilities, they are not given handbooks such as worksheets or packages. Even though they were given a textbook, they just flipped through the pages without understanding the contents of the book.

"They still have difficulty reading, so even if they are given reading books it is useless, all the materials come from me."¹⁵

The teacher must outsmart how the material can be conveyed by not just relying on learning resources in the form of books. Because of their special features, students get bored easily and cannot learn monotonously.

2. The Solution To Overcome The Problems

a. The Needs for Curriculum that Suit with Disable Needs

The solution for the implementation of the current Merdeka curriculum is that the government must see the readiness and feasibility of each school for the implementation of this new curriculum. Readiness and feasibility can be seen from the human resources, which

¹⁴ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

¹⁵ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

include teaching staff and students. There is a need for assistance and training for teachers.

"To optimize the design of this new curriculum, the government must be diligent in socializing and providing direction to teachers"¹⁶.

Therefore, in an application the teacher does not encounter obstacles. In addition, the government must also look at the extent of the capacity of children with disabilities in learning. The learning achievements of students with disabilities and normal students are of course different. Next, the government must provide a reference source as a reference to facilitate teachers in implementing independent learning in teaching and learning activities in the classroom. Then, the government must see whether the school already has complete learning facilities. Facilities that can later be a support for students in learning. Not only the government, schools and teachers carry out Merdeka learning to deepen their understanding of the independent curriculum.

b. The Teacher's ability to Overcome the Problems Student Attitudes and Behavior

1) Attract Students' Attention With Songs

Because children with intellectual disabilities find it difficult to focus when receiving lessons, the teacher must have a way to attract student focus.

"To attract the focus of children with intellectual disabilities is the same as teaching normal children. It's just that they need to be reminded frequently, said Miss Tari"¹⁷.

Therefore, to attract the focus of children with disabilities, several methods can be used. Among them, at the beginning of the lesson to make them interested in the learning activities that will be carried out. These activities can be in the form of singing, or doing certain movements. It turns out that doing so, it has a positive impact that serves to attract student focus and condition

¹⁶Sumarno, The Principal, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 12th, 2023.

¹⁷ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

the class during teaching and learning activities. Then, when the students started not being conducive. Use warnings to students by calling their names, making sounds and tapping students on the shoulder. Teachers can also do ice breaking in the middle of class hours to attract students' attention again. Usually, they will calm down after doing the tricks mentioned above.

2) Improve Students Memory by Repetition

Students with intellectual disabilities have low memory. This low memory causes students to have difficulty remembering the material that has been presented. To overcome this, the teacher must repeat several times in each meeting to remind the material taught at the previous meeting. This repetition is not only done once, twice but every time there is English learning.

"Material repetition can be up to 4-5 times in each meeting¹⁸".

In addition to repetition, the use of songs or chants can stimulate students' memory. Songs are one of the alternative media that make it easier for students to memorize and remember through song tones. It takes a lot of patience to teach a child with an intellectual disability. Therefore, use simple language so that students can easily understand what the teacher is conveying. Convey material according to their comprehension so that it makes it easier for students to master English.

3) Teacher's ability to control students

To condition children with intellectual disabilities when they are angry, they need to be calmed down first. In addition, teachers must make sure they feel safe and comfortable while studying. Students sometimes experience excessive fear, such as fear of not being able to take lessons or receive learning well so they feel afraid to learn. It is important to have good communication between teachers and students. Then,

¹⁸ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

understand how the character of students in learning and understand how their thinking concepts are.

"More to understand the character of each child in learning, if we know what their character is like, we can automatically predict what we should do when the child starts to have tantrums¹⁹."

Next, help them develop self-control measures and emotional control. Help students communicate what they feel and want. When children are angry, gently ask how they feel, then help them think about what happened before the child got angry. The next step is to look for the child's emotional triggers and look for activities that can calm the child.

4) Increase Motivation by Using Fun Media

Several ways can be done to increase student-learning motivation by using fun media. Children with intellectual disabilities are more interested in learning when using interesting media, such as using simple visual aids that can be obtained in class. Like a broom or duster. When the teacher holds one of the objects in the classroom, students will automatically be interested and pay attention to what the teacher will do with that object. It can raise students' curiosity. After successfully getting their attention, the teacher will give instructions on objects in English and guide students to say them. Those way students will be motivated to learn English.

"For motivation to learn comes from the students themselves, we as teachers only help students in generating and increasing motivation and building their self-confidence.²⁰"

Apart from using interesting media, it is important to help students develop self-confidence. Give them the support and confidence to keep growing in every positive activity they do. Give them appreciation every

¹⁹ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

²⁰ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

time they do a task well. Appreciation can be in the form of applause or grades. Giving grades to students when learning English is an important part of the teaching and learning process. This process is a benchmark, of how far students can understand the lesson. Giving grades can also increase student motivation in learning. If the student writes the wrong word or lacks letters, the teacher will not give a perfect score. The function of this method is for students to be more careful in writing, and realize which ones need to be improved. Indirectly students will try to correct their mistakes and be motivated to get a perfect score.

c. The Selection of Appropriate Learning Material

1) Decrease in The Phase of Material

The success of students in mastering a language is influenced by what things they learn. In this case, mastery of the material. Their limitations in thinking make students with intellectual disabilities need quite a long time to process the material that has been taught. To overcome students' difficulties in learning, the teacher lowers the stages of student material phases.

The decline in the material phase referred to is that, even though students have entered junior high school, the material provided is still basic at the same level as elementary school students' material. Giving material is based on students' understanding and the extent to which they can understand English material.

To make it easier for them to learn, the teacher first introduces the English alphabet to students. The teacher teaches students how to pronounce English properly and correctly. Then, the teacher gives vocabulary material to increase the student's vocabulary. The teacher chooses vocabulary material that is around students to make it easier for students to have a real picture of the object in question. The teacher also teaches material related to greetings, such as good morning, hello, and goodbye. Do this every time the lesson starts and ends the lesson. Vocabulary and greeting are basic materials that are equivalent to fourth-grade elementary school.

Success in learning is also determined by parents. Repetition at home will increase the effectiveness of the material taught at school.

"The role of parents in improving the quality of student learning has a significant effect on student achievement."²¹

There must be a balance between education at school and home. Students cannot just be let go, and only depend on what they get at school. There should be learning assistance from parents.

2) English skill

a. Improve listening skills through songs

Every skill in English has its way of teaching. Children with intellectual disabilities are very interested in learning by listening. Learning English by listening is more effective than learning English for other skills. Considering that children with intellectual disabilities find it easier to memorize the material conveyed through songs. The selection of songs with simple lyrics and rhythmic music makes songs an alternative learning tool. Apart from rhythmic songs, the choice of listening to short story material can be another option in teaching English to children with intellectual disabilities. In the order of teaching listening skills to children with intellectual disabilities initially, the teacher gives the material to be taught through sound. The material provided can be in the form of songs or short stories. Then students will be asked to write the words they remember from the listening session.

b. Improve writing skills through giving examples

The skill that must be mastered in learning English is writing. The methods used by the teacher in teaching writing to students with intellectual disabilities are as follows. The teacher uses objects directly. Then, students are given the freedom to hold the object. The function of this activity is to

²¹ SSL, The English Teacher, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

stimulate students' thinking power. They will feel, think, and describe what they see in writing. Not only providing stimulus from pictures, but the English teacher also give examples in the form of simple vocabulary writing on the blackboard, then students will write back in their respective books.

Children with disabilities cannot only be given material and then they will write it themselves. They need to be given an example so they understand what to write. In addition, the teacher must double-check the children's writing because when a child with intellectual disabilities writes the letter "A" on the blackboard, sometimes other letters are written, such as O, B, T, and so on. Then, they often write backward, so the teacher has to pay close attention to their writing. Another method used for teaching writing skills is using blank spaces. Students will be given sheets of paper containing blank spaces. Usually the blank space given contains a short story. Students will fill in the gaps according to the teacher's directions. Indeed, the teacher needs to. Not all students follow the instructions properly, each student still needs the teacher's help in writing. Even some children find it difficult to write if they do not want to write.

c. Improve reading skills through spelling

The mastery of reading skills of students with intellectual disabilities. Reading is an important point because through reading one can find out the information conveyed from a text or other media.

"Different from normal children, in general, children with intellectual disabilities need quite a long time to master reading skills."²²

Systematic guidance is much needed, bearing in mind that children with disabilities have below-average levels of intelligence so they need clear directions. The steps taken in teaching reading to students with intellectual disabilities in learning

²² SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

English are to introduce basic letters in English. Give readings in the form of short readings and help them spell. Most students with intellectual disabilities find it easier to recognize things with pictures. Therefore, to make it easier for them to learn, the teacher provides pictures as inducements while studying. With pictures, they will easily identify the intent of the reading. Their reading target is only simple sentences. Lastly, is speaking skills.

d. Improve speaking skills through pronunciation

Children with intellectual disabilities have limitations in speaking. The words they spoke were unclear and even difficult to understand. They tend to repeat the same words. The language they produce is slower than other children their age. The method that the teacher uses to improve student's English speaking ability is as follows. After the students have finished writing the types of vocabulary, the teacher will give examples of how to pronounce the correct vocabulary. Then alternately, the students will come forward to say the vocabulary one by one with the help of the teacher.

d. The Selesction Of Appropriate Learning Models

1) Using Various Models Of Learning

The solution to overcome the learning model problem is to use a variety of learning models. Variations of this learning model are question and answer, direct instruction and modeling.

"This method was chosen because students with intellectual disabilities cannot learn independently or use the discussion learning model²³".

The English teacher uses the direct instruction-learning model to make it easier for students to understand the teacher's instructions. Then the sequence of delivering the material using the method mentioned above is as follows. After the teacher delivers the material, the teacher will ask questions to

²³ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

students to measure how well students understand the material presented or students are appointed to come forward to recite the vocabulary they have learned. In addition, the teacher also uses the modeling method, where the teacher will exemplify several movements when teaching material related to verbs. The teacher will give examples such as running, sitting, jumping and walking and so on. Then students will guess in Indonesian, and then the teacher will translate it into English. Teaching students with intellectual disabilities is like teaching young children. Teachers are required to be creative and innovative in creating a fun learning environment.

2) Using Various Learning media

To overcome the limitations of learning media, teachers make use of objects and technology that are still accessible. Learning media for students with intellectual disabilities is divided into 3, namely audio, visual and audio-visual media. The first type of learning media is audio. This audio learning media focuses on the sense of hearing. Things that can be done by utilizing various kinds of technology include using sound or audio from cell phones. English teachers use audio media as a tool to improve students' listening skills.

Second, the media used is visual media. The advantage of using this media is that children can get a direct picture of what the teacher is conveying, can attract students' attention and provide a clear presentation of the material. In addition, using visual media makes it easier for students to digest the material properly. Visual media can be in the form of pictures, and objects around students with intellectual disabilities.

Third, other supporting media for success in learning English are audio and visual combination media. Audiovisual media contains media in the form of pictures and sounds which certainly attract the attention of students. This media is considered the most effective because children will be enthusiastic in the teaching and learning process. An example of visual media that teachers often use is video. Videos can be in the form of illustrated song videos or short film videos.²⁴

²⁴ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

3) Using Internet As An Alternative Source

Even though students do not have handbooks like worksheets, teaching and learning activities are still running with source material coming from the teacher. To overcome obstacles regarding student teaching resources, teachers use the internet as a teaching resource. The main teaching source still comes from the teacher's handbook and innovation from the teacher herself. Advances in technology now make it easier for teachers and students to access and find learning resources anywhere. Therefore, teachers use the internet to find suitable material resources for persons with intellectual disabilities. From the internet, teachers find a lot of light and innovative learning content.

"For example today discussing floods, I will browse pictures of rain and show them to students. Then I will ask them. What caused the flood? They answered rain. What is rain in English? Rain²⁵,"

Indirectly students add to their vocabulary from what they see on the internet. Colorful pictures and interactive videos accompany material found on the internet. With interesting learning resources, it will increase students' interest in learning. So learning is not always monotonous books, learning can be done from anywhere.

C. Discussion

1. Analysis data of Problems Faced by Teachers in Teaching English for Intellectual Disability

Based on the observation and interviews, the researcher found four problems faced by the teacher in teaching English to intellectual disabilities.

First, problem with the curriculum. The implementation of the Merdeka curriculum for children with disabilities is inseparable from the role of the teacher in carrying out learning for students. However, in its implementation the teacher still encountered several obstacles. Some of these obstacles start from teachers who do not have experience in independent learning, teachers who have not been able to adopt a Merdeka curriculum, lack learning experience in an independent way, lack of references and lack of

²⁵ SSL, The English Teacher , The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 13th, 2023.

facilities to support learning.²⁶ This is similar to what Neva mentioned in her research, that the obstacles that arise are still around teacher competence in implementing the independent curriculum. The problem that arises along with what the researcher previously described is that the teacher is still adapting to curriculum changes, the teacher does not know the ins and outs of the independent learning curriculum and is not maximal in developing the independent learning curriculum because there are no teaching achievement guidelines or learning guidelines so that the teaching process becomes less than optimal.²⁷

From the explanation above, it is clear that implementing the new curriculum requires careful preparation from schools, teaching staff and students. There needs to be socialization and follow-up actions such as training and adding references so that in practice teachers can adapt quickly and can provide optimal learning by the applicable curriculum.

Second, the problem of attitudes and behavior of children. Children with intellectual disabilities have special features in terms of the character and attitude they show. Children with intellectual disabilities usually experience delays and difficulties in language development and self-expression and speech. Constantly moving, unable to sit from one place to another, unstable or poor concentration, impulsivity, and anger.²⁸

From the data collected by the researchers, there are several problems faced by English teachers when teaching children with intellectual disabilities. Some of these obstacles, include:

- a) Difficulty in conditioning the class.
- b) Teachers have difficulty attracting the attention and focus of students with intellectual disabilities.
- c) Emotions of students who fluctuate or get angry easily.
- d) Lack of student learning motivation

²⁶ SM, The Principal, The Interview from The Researcher, transcript, January 12th, 2023.

²⁷ Neva Lionitha Ibrahim, "Identifikasi Faktor Penghambat Penerapan Kurikulum Merdeka Belajar Pada Tingkat Sekolah Menengah Atas", <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/365946922>

²⁸ Xiaoyan Ke & Jing Liu, "Intellectual Disability In Rey JM (ed), IACAPAP E-Textbook Of Child And Adolescent Mental Health, 2012.

According to Yusril Linusi, there are several kinds of obstacles in his research. Here are some obstacles found when teaching children with intellectual disabilities²⁹, including:

- a) Teachers have difficulty managing classes.
- b) Teachers find it difficult to communicate with students.

As mentioned above, the problem faced by teachers lies in the character of children with intellectual disabilities who are difficult to control and lack ability in learning. Starting from the difficulty of conditioning students, the lack of interest in student learning, the difficulty of mastering English skills and students' unstable emotions.

Third, the problems faced by teachers when teaching English materials to children with intellectual disabilities. In this case, the researcher found that the teacher had difficulty choosing which material was suitable for students with intellectual disabilities, student learning outcomes and targets. Because of the limitations of students in learning. Intellectual disabilities are students who have learning difficulties, which make them very slow in learning compared to normal students³⁰. The teacher only gives basic vocabulary material to students related to their environment. The teacher has difficulty giving instructions to students, the teacher has difficulties in teaching writing and reading skills, the teacher has difficulty controlling students' pronunciation because of language limitations of Intellectually Disability students.

Fourth, the teacher has difficulty applying the learning model. Only a few learning models can be adapted to students. Students with intellectual disabilities have limited intellectual functioning such as reasoning, slow learning and problem-solving³¹. This is what causes students not to be able to study independently, discuss or only be given assignments. In addition, teachers also have problems due to the lack of learning support media.

²⁹ Yusril linusi et al., "The Problems and Challenges English Teachers Face in Teaching Students with Disabilities," *Jurnal Linguistik, Sastra dan Pendidikan* 7, no.1 April (2022): p.68-69

³⁰ Nostalgianti, Khusna & Bhennita. Strategi Guru Dalam Pengajaran Reading Comprehension Pada Siswa Disabilitas Intelektual Dipendidikan Luar Biasa. *Journal of Special Education* 6, no.2, 8-16. <https://doi.org/10.31537/speed.v6i2.804>

³¹ Dina Maria Nainggolan. Finding God Within People With Intellectual Disability. *Gema Teologika* 7, no.2 (2022), 151. <https://doi.org/10.21460/gema..2022.72.684>

2. Analysis data of Solution To Overcome The Problem

Solutions are useful to solve every problem. There is a solution as an effort to solve every problem found in every obstacle. Like the problems faced by teachers while teaching students with intellectual disabilities.

First the curriculum solution. The current Merdeka curriculum that is implemented has pros and cons. Because the teachers are not yet ready to apply the Merdeka curriculum. The government need to continue to provide provision and training for teachers so they can implement the curriculum properly. In addition, the government must provide reference sources that can assist teachers in implementing the Merdeka curriculum. Not only the government, teachers also had to prepare themselves. In this case with self-study. Such as participating in webinar series or learning through platforms provided by the government. In line with the successful strategy of Merdeka curriculum implementation independently. It was stated to succeed in the Merdeka curriculum design. Teachers can search for information Merdeka learning through learning communities, independent teaching platforms, or take advantage of support service centers to get information that is more complete.

Second the solution for the attitudes and behavior of students. Based on the results of the research, solutions for dealing with students with intellectual disabilities regarding the attitudes of students can be summarized as follows:

- a) Teachers must have a high level of patience
- b) Building good communication with students
- c) Understand the character of each student
- d) Able to motivate students to increase their confidence in learning
- e) Able to position themselves as teachers and friends for students so that they feel comfortable in learning.
- f) Help students to focus on the lesson.

The teacher must show a positive attitude. Show that we as teachers have compassion for students. Adjust the child's condition and understand what they want. With dialogue and using a soft voice. Help students focus their attention. Moreover, explain logically and practically what the teacher wants to convey. Thus, good communication and empathy will be formed between the teacher and students. Good communication makes it easier for teachers to teach students.

Third, The selection of material becomes a determinant of the success of a lesson. Like teaching English to children in general, children are first introduced to basic things in English. Vocabulary is the basic material taught by English teachers to Intellectual Disability children after being introduced to the alphabet. The selection of simple materials is the main choice, because so far they have only caught simple materials. The form of language teaching also has differences, unlike teaching normal children in general. They have to repeat many times to improve memory.

The teacher uses several learning strategies to facilitate students in absorbing the subject matter being taught. These teaching strategies include:

- a) Providing examples of writing vocabulary. The teacher uses this method by first writing on the blackboard so students know what to write.
- b) Checking the child's writing, to make sure the words written match those written on the blackboard.
- c) Providing rewards to children as a form of teacher support and appreciation for what students are doing.
- d) Repetition of material repeatedly, by taking turns advancing or using songs.

According to Ulvha, there are several strategies that teachers use in teaching vocabulary to people with intellectual disabilities, including³²:

- a) Repetition of material repeatedly. The function of repetition of material is to review material that has been taught in countless numbers.
- b) Sampling and checking. By giving examples, students are expected to be able to understand the material and understand what they have to do.
- c) Using songs as a flexible learning resource.
- d) Giving rewards is one of the ways used to increase student motivation in learning.

The method used is almost the same, because this method is considered the most effective in teaching English to children with intellectual disabilities. Periodic repetition forces children to

³²Ulvha Dwi Lestari et al., "English Teacher's Difficulties In Teaching Vocabulary To Students With Learning Disabilities", *Journal Of Linguistics and Language Teaching* 8, no.1 (2022), 100-114. doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.29300/ling.v8i1.6902>

continue to remember. Thus, indirectly they will remember the material. For teaching English which includes mastering the four skills in English, namely listening, writing, reading and speaking, English teachers have their way. For listening skills the teacher uses learning strategies by using songs and short stories. In reading skills the teacher helps students in spelling words in English. Then, for writing and speaking the form of teaching is in the form of giving examples and moving forward for vocabulary pronunciation.

The last, effective learning requires media to support learning. Apart from the media, the learning model also influences the success factor in delivering material. In general, the learning model used to teach students with intellectual disability is in the form of answer and question, direct instruction. Good learning media is media that can represent the meaning of the media itself. The media used is adjusted to the needs of students and class conditions. From the results of the study, the researcher found that student learning media was divided into 3, namely:

- a) Audio media in the form of sound or cellphone audio
- b) Visual media in the form of pictures, ppt, and objects around students with intellectual disabilities.
- c) Audio visual in the form of pictorial song videos or short video films.

As mentioned in Aulia's research, the use of media can increase student enthusiasm for learning. The media used are alphabet blocks, flashcards, pictures, and puzzles. However, in its application, only 2 media are often used, namely alphabet blocks and flashcards.³³ The media used are of course adapted to the needs of students and their use in making it easier for teachers to deliver the material. Even though they have problems when conveying Intellectual Disability to students. But with the help of learning media, students will better understand what the teacher conveys.

³³ Aulia Ramadanti, "Media for Teaching English to Children with Mental Retardation", *Education And Human Development Journal* 7, no.1 (2022), 4-5.