



The Usage of Digital Media in Indonesian Language Learning in Mentally Disabled Children

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Abstract. The background of this research was the use of digital media based on information technology which was still occasional, especially for mentally disabled children. Education for mentally disabled children will be achieved if it was supported by interesting learning media. One of the media, namely Canva, was an application-based media as a learning medium for teachers of mentally disabled children. This research aimed to describe the use of Canva digital media on the reading skills of students with mild intellectual disabilities. The method used was a qualitative descriptive method. The data source in the research was favorable to mentally disabled students. Data in the form of vocabulary produced when reading during Indonesian language learning. Data collection with steps: observation, object determination, data identification, codification, and data tabulation. Students' use of Canva-based digital media SLB Mutiara Kasih Pjauhan Kediri, Class VI with mild mental retardation can be concluded to increase students' concentration in learning. Students with mild mental retardation can read the vocabulary designated in the video completely, although there were still some vocabulary words when reading that are not perfect.

Keywords: Canva Digital Media, Mild Intellectual Impairment, Reading Skills

1 Introduction

In human life, language has a very important role. Language is a medium for conveying ideas, interacting, and communicating. According to Dardjowidjojo (2018: 16) Expressing language is a system of arbitrary verbal symbols that members of a linguistic community use to communicate and interact with each other, based on the culture they share. Various levels of society use language when they want to express something. Language is a verbal tool used to communicate. In expressing language, humans, need a verbal tool that becomes an introduction to language thus it can be conveyed. In this case, speaking is an activity carried out by both children and elderly parents.

Every human being has the same potential to master language. The process and nature of each person's language mastery is dynamic and goes through tiered stages. Language activities have existed since humans were born, this can be seen from the age at which babies are born who express language through crying and this is a sign of what they are feeling. Language and speaking activities are certainly inseparable from language acquisition. Every human being has the same potential to master language.

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The process and nature of each person's language mastery is dynamic and goes through tiered stages. Muslich (2008) defines *language acquisition* as the process of understanding and producing language in humans through several stages, starting from grasping to full fluency; while *language learning* is defined as the process of mastering one's language or another language by a human being. The process of language acquisition continues to increase as the child gets older and the new experiences and things the child encounters around him increase.

Language acquisition is a process of human language development. Children from birth are given the ability to acquire language. This language acquisition is also influenced by social interactions and children's cognitive development. Language acquisition or what is called acquisition takes place in the brain when someone acquires their first language or mother tongue (Sulistyowati et al., 2022). According to Mar'at (2015), language acquisition is a mechanism that allows a process for children to develop language skills. Language acquisition in children can influence their activities in terms of communication, one of which is speaking (Lestari, 2022). This is in line with Natsir (2017) that language acquisition is usually differentiated from language learning. Language learning is related to the processes that occur when a child learns a second language after he has acquired his first language. The first time a child gets language comes from their mother or caregiver who usually communicates with the child. The problem that usually arises from acquiring this language is that the child does not speak according to what is said, and the child does not pronounce it clearly, which will cause unclear meaning and prevent communication from being smooth (Apriani, 2019). Such things happen to mentally disabled children. Therefore, conveying language to mentally disabled children needs to use media.

Learning media is a tool or intermediary in helping the teaching and learning process between educators and students in realizing good, technology-based learning. Learning media that can be used by mentally disabled sufferers is information technology-based media, one of which is Canva. According to Adawiyah, et al. (2019:200), *Canva* is an application for creating learning media teachers. *Canva* It can also be used directly by students in designing a product from learning, such as logos, posters, advertisements, and so on. The components in this application are very easy to understand thus they can be used to support direct visual learning and can train students' visual literacy skills.

Children with special needs are children who, in the process of growth or development, experience physical, mental-intellectual, social, or emotional abnormalities or deviations compared to other children of their age, thus they require special services (Darmawanti and Jannah, 2004:15). One example of a child with special needs is a mentally disabled child. Mentally disabled children are children who experience obstacles in mental and intellectual development, which also has an impact on cognitive and behavioral development. In line with that, Purbani (2015:01) explains that mentally disabled is a term used to refer to children or people who have below-average intellectual abilities or can also be called mental retardation.

Mangunsong (2009:134) suggests that mental retardation can be categorized into three, namely mild mental retardation, moderate mental retardation, and severe mental retardation. Mild mental retardation has an IQ level of 55 – 70 and can be able to learn, moderate mental retardation has an IQ level of 40 – 55 and can be able to practice

certain skills, severe mental retardation has an IQ of 25 – 40 and requires supervision and care in daily life. Mild mental retardation is included in the category of children with mental disabilities who are capable of being educated which means they are still able to optimize their abilities in functional academic areas such as reading, writing, and simple arithmetic.

There are four components of language skills, including listening skills, speaking skills, reading skills, and writing skills (Tarigan, 2008:1). These four language skills are inseparable components, interrelated with each other and all four will always appear even if you only focus on one aspect of the skill.

The ability to read is a necessity in life, not only from an educational perspective but is also very important in social life. By reading, students will know more about everything, students will also have broader knowledge and insight. Reading skills are the main capital of students. With these abilities, students can learn other knowledge, communicate their ideas, and express themselves (Suparlan, 2021: 6) Reading is essentially a process of thinking, reading is the process of translating written symbols into words - 33 spoken words which involve various aspects such as visual, thinking, psycholinguistic and metacognitive (Rahim, 2005:2). Reading requires three basic components, namely recording, decoding, and meaning. The recording process involves interpreting written symbols and associating them with sounds according to the writing system used, then translating them into words called *decoding* (encoding). *Meaning* is understanding the meaning contained in the words or sentences that are read, for this reason, reading requires memory, concentration, thinking, and reasoning to be able to understand the content of the reading.

Reading skills are divided into two classifications, namely (a) beginning reading, and (b) advanced reading. Early reading ability is marked by literacy, which is the ability to recognize written symbols and be able to sound them out correctly. In this phase, the understanding of the content of the reading is not yet apparent because the reader's orientation is more towards the identification of language sound symbols. In further reading, the ability to read 34 is marked by the ability to read discourse. That is, the reader not only recognizes the written symbols, can sound them out fluently, but can also quote the content/meaning of what he reads. The emphasis on further reading lies in understanding the content of the reading, even at a high level it should be accompanied by adequate reading speed.

Mentally disabled children have problems of their own, especially in terms of cognitive capacity and their verbal abilities in particular. Studies on retarded mental children have been conducted by some researchers, however, there are few studies to portray the speaking ability of language acquisition for a mild mentally disabled student which focus on psycholinguistics (Sulistyowati dan Rukmini, 2021).

2 Research Methods

This qualitative descriptive research method was chosen by the researcher to find out how children with special needs acquire language using electronic media. It was explained by Djajasudarma (2010:17) that descriptive research was data collected from

manuscripts, interviews, notes, fieldwork, photos, videotapes, personal documents, and so on. Descriptive research was usually used in qualitative research. Qualitative research methods were methods that focus on meaning, description, clarification, and placement of data in their respective contexts and the form of words (Mahsun, 2006:233). This research chose to use a qualitative descriptive method because it existed to describe how digital media is used Canva on the writing skills of class VI students with mild mental retardation at SLB Mutiara Kasih Pringan Kediri.

The data source in the research was a class VI mentally disabled student in the mild category named Bani (12 years). The data produced in this research was a vocabulary produced by class VI students with mild intellectual disabilities at SLB Mutiara Kasih Pringan Kediri on reading skills. Data collection with steps: observation, object determination, recording, transcription, identification, codification, and tabulation.

3 Results and Discussion

3.1 Obtaining Results of Reading Skills for Mildly Intellectually Impaired Students

Table 1. The Reading Skill Result of Light Mentally Disabled Students

Number	Vocabulary	Reading Result
1.	Kucing (Cat)	[koceng]
2	Singa (Lion)	[sinya]
3	Kelinci (Rabbit)	[kinci]
4	Kupu (Butterfly)]kupu]
5	Kambing (Goat)	[wedhus]

3.2 Description of the Use of Canva-Based Digital Media on the Reading Skills of Class VII Students with Mildly Mentally Impaired Students

Data (1)



Researcher : (showing the picture and kucing (cat) writing in the media) How to read this one? Can you read it, Ilham?

Object : Yes, I can.

Researcher : How to read it?

Object : / koceng/

In data excerpt (1) from the researcher's conversation with the object showing a video with a picture that says the cat. The object answers [koceng]/ with Javanese

vocabulary. In the word [cat] the sound changes to [koceng]. There are two phoneme changes /u/ changes to /o/ and /i/ changes to /e/. This is due to family environmental factors that use Javanese. Therefore, autistic children's language acquisition is achieved by responding to the speech they hear in their daily environment which still uses Javanese. Thus, the habit factor in using Javanese is very strong.

Data 2



Researcher : This is a brown lion.

Object : I see. [sinya], [sinya] [lion], [lion]

Data (2) in the word [lion] changes its sound to [sinya]. The word [lion] becoming [sinya] is an assembling error. This is shown by the /g/ phoneme in the word lion becoming the /y/ phoneme. The articulation of the phoneme /g/ is included in the soft palatal area, this area is called the velum. On the soft palate, the back of the tongue can be placed to form velar sounds such as /g/, while the articulation of the /y/ phoneme is in a different location. Therefore the word [lion] should use the phoneme /g/. Researchers use Canva media to focus on students with intellectual disabilities.

Data 3

Researcher : This a picture of rabbit. What is its fur color?



Object :[utih] [cilinci] [white] [rabbit]

Researcher : What is the color of the cloud?

Object ; [bilu] [blue]

Data (3) The researcher showed a picture of a rabbit using Canva media. The mentally disabled object is just silent and smiling. Researchers invite them to color pictures of rabbits. The object answers the word [utih] which changes the sound /tih/. In this case, the error that occurred was an assembly error perseverated. The confusion occurs in the last syllable. The form of the phrase [white rabbit] being pronounced as an object into the word [utih cilinci] is an assembling error in the transposition category. Phonologically, the word [putih] is pronounced [utih] with the removal of the phonememubajan, /p/ at the beginning and changes in the phonemes /k/, emkado /c/ and the phoneme /e/ to /i/. Likewise, to say the color [blue] becomes [bilu], the phoneme /r/ changes to the phoneme /l/.

Data 4



Researcher : What picture do we have here?

Object : [kupu-kupu] [butterfly]

Researcher : How many?

Object : [satu] [one]

In data excerpt (4) conducted by researchers with mentally disabled students through a conversation process using Canva media, the word spoken by the student is the word [butterfly] which is correct. The word [butterflies] means more than one or plural. The words used by mentally disabled students are pronounced clearly. Thus, the language acquisition of mentally disabled children is achieved by responding correctly to the speech they hear in their daily environment. Likewise, the mention of numbers is correct.

Data 5



Researcher: What is the fur color of a goat?

Object : oh /wedhus/ fur [utih] [white]

Researcher : And what is the color of its ear?

Object : [cokat] [brown]

Based on the five data excerpts that the researcher conducted with light-minded students in the conversation process showed that the Canva media that the students wanted to ask was pronounced [wedhus]. In the research process, even though the researcher showed that it was [goat] it was still called {wedhus}. The use of color vocabulary is correct for brown but for the word [white} it is pronounced [white]. In this way, there is a process of eliminating one phoneme [p] at the beginning of the prosthesis.

4 Conclusion

Based on the results of descriptive qualitative research using observation and interview techniques carried out at SLB Mutiara Kasih Pringan Kediri, regarding the use of

Canva-based digital media in Indonesian language learning for mentally disabled children in class VII, it can be concluded as follows:

1. The use of Canva-based digital media on students' reading skills class VII mild intellectual disability can help improve the concentration of mentally disabled students in class.
2. The mildly mentally disabled object can pronounce the words shown on the video display well and completely even though there are still some words spoken in Javanese because of the environment, and
3. The pronunciation of numbers is correct.

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