

## **IMPROVING COGNITIVE LEARNING OUTCOMES OF *SLOW LEARNER STUDENTS* THROUGH LEARNING STRATEGIES AT SDI AL-AZHAAR TULUNGAGUNG**

**Irdla 'Ilmi Dzanis Shulha\*<sup>1</sup>, Mohammad Ja'far As-shodiq <sup>2</sup>,  
Agus Purwowododo<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3</sup>UIN Sayyid Ali Rahmatullah Tulungagung

[irdlailmi09@gmail.com](mailto:irdlailmi09@gmail.com)<sup>\*1</sup>, [as-shodiq@uinsatu.ac.id](mailto:as-shodiq@uinsatu.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>,  
[widodopurwo74@gmail.com](mailto:widodopurwo74@gmail.com)<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract.** Slow learning is one type of learning problem or difficulty that often arises in elementary school. Slow learners are children who have intellectual potential slightly below normal but are not yet mentally disabled. So each learning activity takes longer than other children who have the same level of intellectual potential. This research aims to analyze and find teacher strategies for improving the learning outcomes of slow-learner students at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung. The approach used in this research is descriptive qualitative. The subjects in this research were the principal, the third grade teacher and the accompanying teacher. The data was collected using participant observation, documentation and in-depth interviews. The results of the research obtained at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung show that the teacher's strategy in improving the learning outcomes of slow learner students is there is an accompanying teacher as a therapist, one student and

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one accompanying teacher. Then provide resource centre classroom facilities, and special programs related to collaboration between schools by emphasizing control over students' food intake.

**Keywords :** *slow learner, learning strategy, Learning Outcomes*

**Abstrak.** Lambat belajar adalah salah satu jenis masalah atau kesulitan belajar yang sering muncul di sekolah dasar. Siswa lambat belajar adalah anak-anak yang memiliki potensi intelektual sedikit di bawah normal namun belum sampai pada kategori disabilitas mental. Oleh karena itu, setiap aktivitas belajar memerlukan waktu lebih lama dibandingkan dengan anak-anak lain yang memiliki tingkat potensi intelektual yang sama. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis dan menemukan strategi guru dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa lambat belajar di SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung. Pendekatan yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah deskriptif kualitatif. Subjek dalam penelitian ini adalah kepala sekolah, guru kelas tiga, dan guru pendamping. Data dikumpulkan melalui observasi partisipatif, dokumentasi, dan wawancara mendalam. Hasil penelitian yang diperoleh di SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung menunjukkan bahwa strategi guru dalam meningkatkan hasil belajar siswa lambat belajar adalah dengan adanya guru pendamping sebagai terapis, satu siswa didampingi oleh satu guru pendamping. Selanjutnya, menyediakan fasilitas kelas pusat sumber, dan program khusus terkait dengan kolaborasi antara

sekolah dengan menekankan pengawasan terhadap asupan makanan siswa.

**Kata Kunci:** *Slow Learner, Strategi Pembelajaran, Hasil Belajar*

## **PENDAHULUAN**

Education is a process of teaching and learning between educators and students to gain the knowledge that is expected and will become a provision for the future. <sup>1</sup>Education is a conscious and planned strategy to create a learning atmosphere and learning process so that students actively develop their potential to have spiritual strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, morals, and the skills needed by themselves, society, nation and state.<sup>2</sup> To achieve educational goals, teachers are expected to have several strategies that can increase the effectiveness of student learning. The use of strategies in teaching is very necessary to facilitate students' learning process so that they can achieve optimal learning outcomes.

Strategy in the educational context is interpreted as planning the teaching and learning process which is designed in such a way as to realize educational goals. Meanwhile, learning is a system which consists of several components, namely messages, people, materials, equipment, techniques, and background or environment. Learning strategies can also be interpreted as activities in the form of stages, methods, or tips carried out by teachers to convey learning material to students by utilizing learning resources and media and learning program packages for students to achieve learning goals effectively and

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<sup>1</sup> Amos Neolaka And Grace Amalia A. Neolaka, *Landasan Pendidikan (Dasar Pengenalan Diri Sendiri Menuju Perubahan Hidup)*, (Depok: Kencana, 2017), p. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 20 of 2003 concerning the National Education System, (Jakarta: Offset Graphic Sinar, 2007), p. 3.

efficiently.<sup>3</sup> Student learning outcomes can be seen from the teacher's success in creating an atmosphere study which pleasant so that students easily and can understand the lessons given by the teacher. Results Study cognitive domain according to Bloom covers mastery draft, idea, knowledge factual, and regarding with skills intellectual.<sup>4</sup> However, obstacles and problems are often encountered in the teaching and learning process, one of the problems frequently encountered is the problem of learning difficulties experienced by students.<sup>5</sup>

Based on a preliminary study conducted by researchers at SDI Al-Azhaar Kedungwaru Tulungagung, where the school has advantages in the form of strategies and special teachers in dealing with slow learners, information was obtained that there were several slow learners in several classes. Symptoms of students who are indicated to be slow learners that appear are usually easy to forget, difficult to understand abstract learning, slow in reasoning, limited language vocabulary, slow in understanding information in written form, reading, writing and arithmetic skills are weak and their grades are usually low. Therefore, teachers must provide special strategies, teaching must be done slowly and repeatedly.

From the reality in the field, these slow learners require more attention in the learning process because their learning needs are different from other normal students due to intelligence disorders. Learning results in the cognitive domain show that slow-learner children have below-average cognitive competence, but cannot be called disabled or have special needs.<sup>6</sup> There needs to be a special learning strategy to help

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<sup>3</sup> Dick, W & Carey, The Systematic Design of Instruction (4th Ed), (New York Happer Collins, 1996).

<sup>4</sup>Krathwohl, BS Bloom, BB Masia , *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives. The Classification of Educational Goals* , Handbook II: Affective Domain. David McKay Company, Inc. 1964.

<sup>5</sup> Abu Ahmadi, Widodo Supriyono, *Psikologi Belajar*, (Jakarta: Rineka Cipta, 2004), p. 101.

<sup>6</sup> Borah., *Slow Learners: Role of Teachers and Guardians in Honing Hidden Skills*.

slow learners. Teachers must try to improve students' understanding of each material taught considering learning outcomes achieved by slow learner children who generally get below student learning achievement on average.<sup>7</sup> In this way, teachers need to create appropriate strategies to provide stimulus related to material that cannot yet be understood, so that the learning outcomes that teachers expect can improve well.

Considering the importance of the learning process, teachers are required to be able to adapt, select and combine learning strategies and approaches appropriate according to the characteristics and needs of students, especially slow learners. Teachers also have a big role in trying all the ways so that students can improve student learning outcomes. Based on the problems that have been described, encourage researchers to analyze in more depth appropriate learning strategies for children who have learning problems or obstacles, especially slow learners in this journal with the title "Improving cognitive learning outcomes for slow learners through learning strategies at SDI Al-Azhaar Tulungagung".

## **METHOD**

This research uses a qualitative approach with a type of field research with a phenomenological view, namely collecting as much data as possible regarding the strategies teachers use with slow learners in learning activities to improve students' cognitive learning outcomes. The research was carried out at SDI Al-Azhaar Tulungagung, where the school has teachers, classes and special programs for dealing with slow learners.

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<sup>7</sup> Shaw, S., Grimes, D., Bulman, J. Educating Slow Learners: Are Charter Schools the Last, Best Hope for Their Educational Success. *The Charter Schools Resource Journal*. Vol. 1 No. 1. Winter. [www.ehhs.cmich.edu](http://www.ehhs.cmich.edu), 2005.

Data collection methods use in-depth interviews, participant observation and documentation. The data analysis method uses the Milles and Huberman Model data analysis which consists of data condensation, data presentation, and drawing conclusions and verification. The data validity test uses data triangulation techniques. The triangulation technique in this research uses the source triangulation technique, carried out by checking the data that has been obtained through sources, namely the principal, head of curriculum and SDI Al-Azhaar Tulungagung teachers as informants in this research. Researchers also use reference materials as support to prove the data that researchers have found, and researchers also carry out dependability tests with guidance from the thesis lecturer.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

Research conducted at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung found that there were very serious efforts in dealing with slow-learning students. To improve students' understanding and cognitive learning outcomes, the institution holds special programs for slow learners. The advantages of SDI Al-Azhaar Tulungagung in dealing with slow learners, First; provide very adequate facilities in the form of special teachers or therapists and special classes to accommodate students who are slow learners. The accompanying teacher at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung is different from the class teacher. Accompanying teachers are specifically provided for slow learners and children with special needs. Some have the required competencies, such as psychology graduates. These accompanying teachers are given training at the start of each new school year in collaboration with experts such as Dr. Lyly Ekawati Candra, Sp. A., and Dr. Rudy Sutadi, Sp. A., where he gave guidance to the accompanying teacher on how to deal with students who are slow learners.

Therapists as accompanying teachers provide learning direction to students, observe cognitive, affective and psychomotor development, and are tasked with evaluating the

process and learning outcomes of children. For example, a therapist or accompanying teacher provides direction during a regular class. When students cannot understand the material taught by the class teacher, the role of the accompanying teacher is to direct them with grammar that the slow learner can understand. The accompanying teacher will continue to be there beside the students in regular classes. This is following what Krisna Indah M said, students who are slow learners experience difficulties in all lessons, so they need personal assistance with methods that suit the student's character. The therapist who accompanies the student is competent and has the abilities and methods for each student.

Second; we provide resource centre class facilities, namely therapy classes specifically for developing occupational alignment of fine motor and gross motor coordination. Apart from regular classes, this special class is needed if children need to study separately from friends in the same class. The therapist or assistant teacher intensively applies face-to-face learning according to the results of observations of student deficiencies during regular learning.

In one of the cases at SDI Al Azhaar, a student named Muhammad Asyrofa Rusli, who is in grade 3, has a slow learner speciality with the characteristics of not being able to differentiate between the letters B, D, P and Q, and not being able to differentiate and match uppercase letters with lowercase letters. Not yet able to read syllables and words. Learning strategy in the first special class, Drilling by showing upper and lower case letter cards. Second, memorize the letters of the alphabet every morning. Third, pair uppercase and lowercase letters correctly. Fourth, show two letter cards arranged together and then students read and spell. Fifth, show word cards with pictures and then students read and spell. With this strategy, the student named Asyrof gradually made progress in his learning outcomes and was able to participate in regular learning like other friends. This is by what Suhartin said that teachers do not equate learning methods between normal

students and students who are slow learners. They are given longer time and are more specialized in studying.

Third; Providing special programs related to cooperation between schools by emphasizing control over students' food intake. Dietary regulation is aimed at sorting out which foods are allowed and which are not allowed to be eaten to make students' thinking abilities and behaviour more controlled. It is proven that with the diet program implemented, students in learning can focus on studying and learning is more conducive. A diet that involves not consuming flour and the like, milk, sugar and chocolate.

Collaboration with students' parents regarding diet is very important to help teachers in dealing with students' concentration problems. This is under Aziz's opinion that good cooperation between parents and teachers in carrying out programs specifically for slow-learning children will help improve their abilities. In the process of guiding slow learner children, if you only expect from the school the results you will get will certainly be less than optimal.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the results of research conducted at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung, the efforts made by teachers in handling slow learner children at SDI Al Azhaar Tulungagung are, firstly; there is an accompanying teacher as a therapist, one student and one accompanying teacher. Next; provide resource centre class facilities. Furthermore; Providing special programs related to cooperation between schools by emphasizing control over students' food intake. Based on research, this special program implemented by SDI Al Azhaar is very good compared to other schools in the area. So according to the researchers, it may only be necessary to add additional teachers and special classrooms in proportion to the increase in capacity that will be carried out.



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