

**THE USE OF VISUAL SUPPORTS TO OVERCOME THE LEARNING
DIFFICULTIES FACED BY AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD)
SUFFERERS IN “AUTISM UM LABORATORY SCHOOL”
(A CASE STUDY OF THREE ASD STUDENTS)**

THESIS

**BY
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**STUDY PROGRAM OF ENGLISH
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES AND LITERATURE
FACULTY OF CULTURAL STUDIES
UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA
2014**

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DIFFICULTIES FACED BY AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (ASD) SUFFERERS
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THESIS

**Presented to
Universitas Brawijaya
in partial fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of *Sarjana Sastra***

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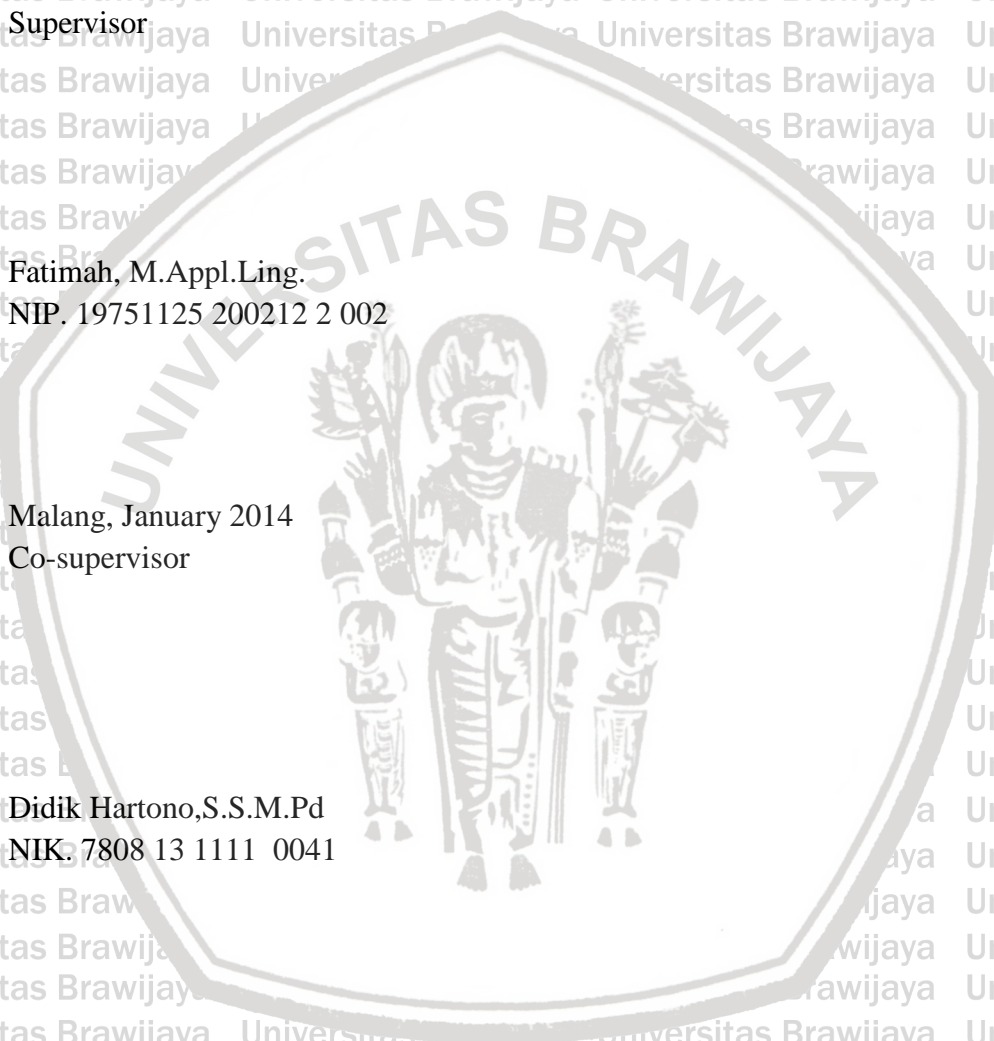
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ABSTRACT

Agriani, Trisakti. 2013. **The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome The Learning Difficulties Faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School (A Case Study of Three ASD Students)** Study Program of English, Department of Languages and Literature, Faculty of Cultural Studies, Universitas Brawijaya. Supervisor: Fatimah; Co-supervisor: Didik Hartono

Keywords: Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Learning Difficulties, Visual Supports.

According to the Centers for Disease Control Prevention in 2013, Autism Spectrum Disorder now affects 1 in every 110 children in the world and the number of people who affected to autism are increasing at the rate of 10 to 17 percent per year. All people with autism have difficulties with social interaction and behavior, but the extent and type of difficult may vary. It is obvious that actually with the impairments which exist in autism children, it will affect their learning process also. Therefore, becoming aware of the warning signs of learning difficulties faced by autism children and getting autism children the necessary help early can become the key to an autism child's future. The writer focuses on the learning difficulties which are faced by Autistic students in case of retaining the information from the teachers and also focuses on the visual supports which are used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School.

This study used qualitative approach. The subjects being investigated were three autism students on fifth grade at Autism UM Laboratory School. The data were obtained from observation in the VA Class and in the participants' house in order to know kinds of learning difficulties based on Attwood's theory in 1998. In answering the second problems of the study, the writer also interviewed parents and the teachers of autism students in order to know the visual supports that they used to overcome the learning difficulties based on Hodgdon and Quill theory in 1995.

The result reveals that there are learning difficulties faced by the autism students such as tendency to make irrelevant comments, difficulty in understanding complex language, poor concentration, poor in organizational skills, easily stressed due to inflexibility, and also having difficulty in Mathematic. Meanwhile, the visual supports which are used are real objects, photographs, visual schedules, visual task analysis, and also visual to structure their environment.

The writer suggests the school establish positive relationships between the parents and teachers who are believed to improve parental involvement and increase parents' comfort level in working with the school. For the next researchers, they can compare the learning difficulties of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) with other disorders and correlate with the achievement of the students.

ABSTRAK

Agriani, Trisakti. 2013. **Penggunaan Media Visual untuk mengatasi Kesulitan Belajar pada Penderita Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) di Sekolah Autis UM Laboratorium (Studi Kasus pada Tiga Siswa Autis).** Program Studi Sastra Inggris, Jurusan Bahasa dan Sastra, Fakultas Ilmu Budaya, Universitas Brawijaya. Pembimbing I: Fatimah; Pembimbing II: Didik Hartono.

Kata Kunci : Autis, Kesulitan Belajar, Siswa Autis dan Media Visual.

Menurut Pusat Pengawasan dan Penanggulangan Penyakit di tahun 2013, Penyakit Autis sekarang menyerang satu anak di setiap 110 anak di dunia dan jumlah anak yang terjangkit autis meningkat sekitar 10 hingga 17 persen tiap tahun nya. Oleh karena itu, penulis percaya bahwa setiap anak autis membutuhkan perlakuan khusus yang berbeda dengan anak normal pada umumnya. Semua orang dengan autis memiliki kesulitan dalam hubungan interaksi dan perilaku. Hal ini jelas bahwa dengan keterbatasan yang ada dalam anak autis akan mempengaruhi proses pembelajaran mereka. Penulis fokus pada jenis kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi oleh anak autis dan juga jenis media visual yang digunakan oleh guru-guru di sekolah autis UM Laboratorium untuk mengatasi kesulitan belajar mereka.

Penelitian ini disusun menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif untuk meninjau hubungan dalam penelitian ini. Subyek yang diteliti disini adalah tiga siswa autis di kelas lima sekolah Autis UM Laboratorium dan data diambil melalui observasi di kelas VA, dimana penulis menggunakan teori Attwood (1998) untuk mengetahui jenis kesulitan belajar mereka. Serta, mewawancarai guru dan orangtua dari siswa autis tersebut untuk mengetahui media visual apa yang digunakan berdasarkan teori Hodgdon dan Quill (1995).

Hasil penelitian ini mengungkapkan bahwa ada beberapa jenis kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi oleh siswa autis seperti kecenderungan untuk mengeluarkan komentar yang menyimpang, kesulitan dalam memahami bahasa yang rumit, konsentrasi yang rendah, kemampuan dalam mengorganisir yang rendah, mudah mengalami tekanan jiwa karena kebiasaan yang tidak dapat diubah, dan juga mengalami kesulitan dalam Matematika. Sementara itu Media Visual yang digunakan adalah objek nyata, photo, jadwal visual, analisa tugas visual, dan juga visual untuk pembentukan lingkungan.

Penulis menyarankan bahwa sekolah dapat mempertahankan hubungan yang positif antara guru dan orang tua murid yang mana dipercaya dapat meningkatkan kenyamanan dan keterlibatan orang tua dengan sekolah. Untuk peneliti selanjutnya dapat membandingkan kesulitan belajar pada anak autis dengan penyakit lainnya dan menghubungkan nya dengan prestasi pada anak autis.

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I cannot complete and finish my thesis without the support, motivation,
and help from those beloved people. I hope this thesis will be useful for English
Literature students of faculty of Cultural Studies Universitas Brawijaya,
psychologist and therapists, and also for further researchers who want to conduct
the research in this area.

Malang, January 2014

The Writer

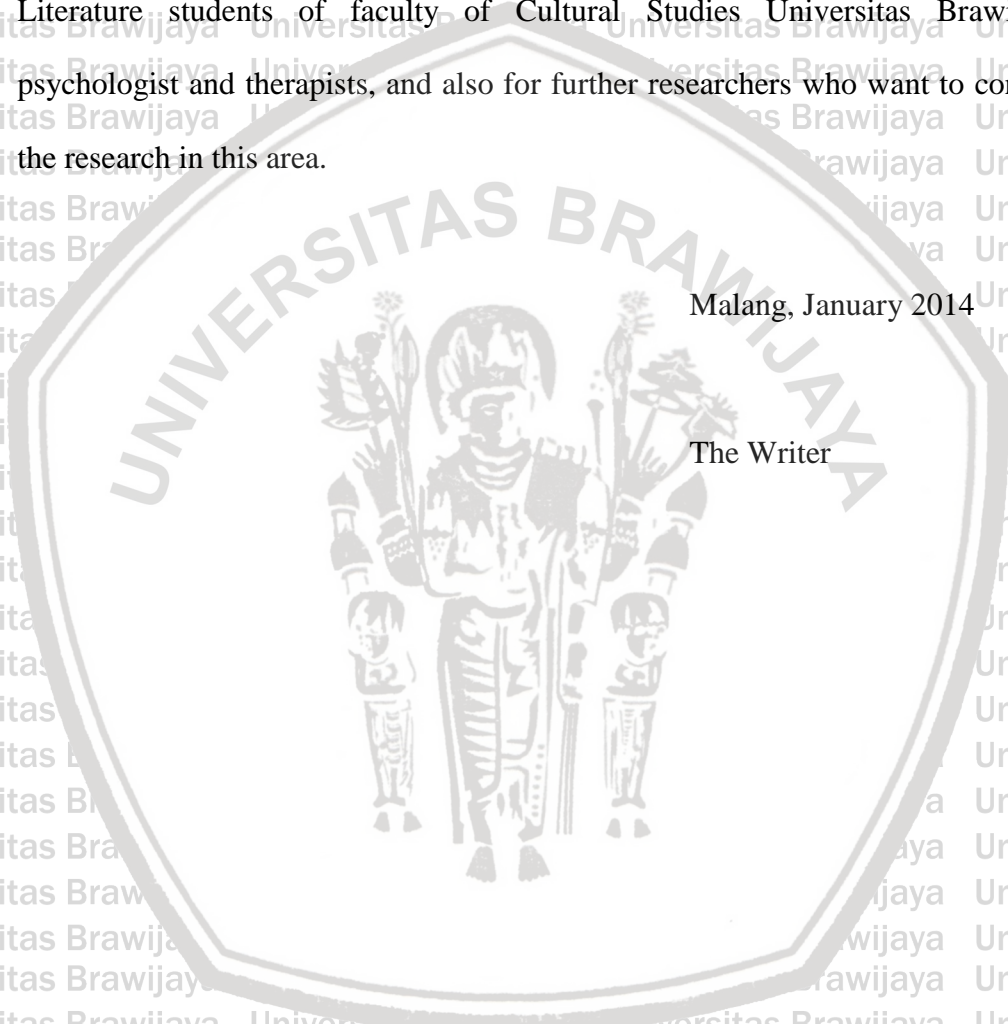


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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the background of the study, problems of the study, objectives of the study, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of the Study

All parents in this world want to have normal children, which can speak well. However, the fact does not go as the expectation. Generally, normal children can speak well in two years old, except for the special need children, such as the autistic ones, who cannot utter the words until four years old. It may be caused by injury at pregnancy stage or environment influence (www.autism-society.org, 2013). Autism is a disorder affecting cognition and language development.

Children with autism have problems in understanding any form of communication, non-verbal as well as verbal. Some autistic children do not develop any useful language at all or use only stereotyped words or phrases that have little or no meaning (www.autisminfo.com, 2013)

Originally, the term autistic means that the child could not communicate to others. They were in a world of their own. But, this term was not enough, as they were individual variations here as well (www.autismspeak.org, 2013). Some could communicate, but not well. As Bristol et al (1996, p.21) state that autism is a life-long developmental disability that prevents people from understanding what they see, hear, and otherwise sense. This results in severe problems with social relationships, communication, and behaviour. Autistic children have difficulty

communicating thoughts and needs verbally and non-verbally. Non-verbal communication in here such as use of gestures, pictures, eye contact, and facial expressions. Autistic children use speech that include repetitive, echolalic, or unusual language. This tendency leads to ritualized behaviors. Ritualized behaviors in this case means that a high level of repetition of activities, mostly in communication or brief motor activity (such as hand-flapping or head-banging).

In addition, David (1986) mentions that autistic children often have a fascination with inanimate objects; they appear to leave an observation with keeping their environment from day to day. Although these children have score below average on intelligence tests, they sometimes show 'splinter skill' for example the splinter skill in autism children can be proven through they can play piano very well or an excellent rote memory.

Language disorder and communication in children may reveal the interrelationship between various aspects of language, as it develops and the knowledge may be used in diagnosing and treating for that disorder as autistic children. Most of these children have problems in language. Moreover, those children with disorder of language and communication are three times more likely to develop behavioral problems rather than normal children. Behavioral problems in here include property destruction, physical aggression and self-injury. (Cantwell, Baker and Mattison, 1979)

There are some examined syntactic performances in autistic children in comparison to retarded and normal children. Pierce and Bortolucci (1997) illustrate the nature of autistic syntax. They composed the spontaneous speech of

autistic children with the normal and retarded children matched for mental age.

The overall level of development in autistic children with average non-verbal mental age of 6 and age of 11 was equivalent to normal 1-2 years old. The syntactic structures used by the autistic group are not different from those of the other two groups, thus the autistic speech is severely delayed.

All people with autism have difficulties with social interaction and behaviour, but the extent and type of difficult may vary. Some individuals may be very withdrawn, while others may be overly active and approach people in peculiar ways. As a result, people with autism find it hard to make friends and have difficulty understanding how someone else feels. While people with autism have accompanying learning difficulties (Rodier, 2000, p.79).

From the statement above, it is obvious that actually with the impairments which exist in autism children, it will affect their learning process also. Therefore, becoming aware of the warning signs of learning difficulties faced by autism children and getting autism children the necessary help early can become the key to an autism child's future. In additions, parents need to be familiar with the early indicators of the learning difficulties on autism children in order to get the right help as soon as possible. The earlier learning difficulties are detected, the better chance a child will have of succeeding in school and in life. Parents are encouraged to understand the warning signs of the learning difficulties from as early as pre-school. Thus from those statements, the writer will conduct an observation about learning difficulties faced by autistic children using Attwood theory and the way to overcome with their learning difficulties by giving visual

supports toward Autism students in this study the writer uses Quill and Hodgson theories in order to analyze the data.

It is believed that every autistic children needs therapy on behavior and language learning in order to overcome with their difficulties, and one of the universities in Indonesia considered to have some of the best lab schools in Indonesia is the State University of Malang (UM). The university has an entire system of schools, ranging from preschool through secondary schools. In addition, they had the first laboratory school for autistic children in the country. These lab schools have been affiliated with the university as classical, university-based lab schools. Autism UM Laboratory School is one of the best schools and best behavior therapies that can help autism children. In this school, learning is centered on children not instruction, because it is understood to be a cognitive and social process. This allows students to achieve deep mastery of both content and creative problem solving. Children develop a sense of responsibility for their own learning and that of the larger learning community. The curriculum is intended to be broad-based, including extra such as arts, sports and music. Autism UM Laboratory School offers unique educational experiences as an innovative option for private school education (Prospectus UM, 2009). Seeing those facts, thus the writer wants to use Autism UM Laboratory School as the place for taking the participants of this study.

The writer found that this study is related to one research conducted by Edyburn (2007) entitled 'Anxiety Disorders in Children with Learning Difficulties and Autism : A Review'. He did an observation in one of autism therapy centres

named ST. Clair Catholic Northumbria England. In this study Gobriel found that there are some types of anxiety disorder which exist in students with autism when they are learning. He analyzed on how this kind of anxiety disorders influence their learning process which create some difficulties. Compared to this present study, the writer focuses on the learning difficulties which are faced by Autistic students in case of retaining the information from the teachers and also focuses on the visual supports which are used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School in order to overcome their learning difficulties. The finding of this study is expected to give both theoretical and practical contributions on the area of linguistics analysis. Theoretically, the findings of this study are expected to be useful to the linguistics study, particularly on the analysis of learning difficulties faced by Autism Sufferers Disorder (ASD) in Autism UM Laboratory School.

In addition, the results of the study are expected to give valuable contribution to three parties. First is for English Literature students of faculty of Cultural Studies Universitas Brawijaya. The result of this study gives them valuable contribution in giving the enrichment of cultural repertoire of students.

Second, for psychologist and therapists, this study gives additional resources to address the need of the children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers.

And also, it is expected to be useful for teachers since it is important for teachers of the autistic students to understand their students' characteristics and behavior especially when they retain the new information through their learning, which may differ from those of other students. Moreover, the results can be used to develop the potential of these young people in order to gain the success in their

school. The last, the result will go for further researchers to give information, comparison and reference when they are going to conduct research in this area.

1.2 Problems of the Study

The problems of this study are formulated as follows :

1. What kinds of learning difficulties are faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School ?
2. What kinds of the visual supports used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School to overcome the learning difficulties of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

In this research, there are two objectives in this study as follows:

1. To investigate kinds of learning difficulties faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School when retaining the material from their teachers.
2. To find out the visual supports that are used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School to overcome the learning difficulties of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers.

1.4. Definition of Key Terms

- **Learning Difficulties** : a neurobiological disorder in which a person's brain works is reduced significantly to understand new or complex information. These differences interfere a person's ability in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, or mathematical abilities. (National Center for Learning Difficulties,1999)
- **Autism** : is disorder affecting cognition and language development, which is caused by brain damage. Children with autism have problems in understanding any form of communication, non- verbal as well as verbal. Autistic children do not develop any useful language at all or use only stereotyped words or phrases that have little meaning. (www.autisminfo.com)
- **Autistic Children** : means that children do not communicate to other, they were in a world of their own. Some of them could communicate, but not well. (www.autism.org.uk).
- **Visual Supports** : are the media for assisting children in their ability to maintain attention, understand spoken language, sequence and organize their environment (Hodgdon, 1995).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter reviews some literatures, which discusses some theories that are able to support this study in answering the problems of this study.

2.1 Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

Autism is a pervasive developmental disorder which is characterized by impairments in communication and social interaction, restricted, repetitive patterns of behaviour, interests, and activities (American Psychiatric Association (APA), 1994). In the last 10 years autism has become the most commonly diagnosed childhood developmental disorder. According to the Centers for Disease Control Prevention in 2013, autism spectrum disorder now affects 1 in every 110 children in the world.

Statistics from the U.S. Department of Education and other government agencies indicate that autism diagnoses are increasing at the rate of 10 to 17 percent per year. In addition, boys are four times more likely to have autism than girls (www.nationalautismresources.com, 2013).

Autism is caused by abnormalities in brain structure or function. It can be also caused from an accident in baby or child stage, injury to mother during pregnancy, damage during baby delivery, poor nutrition, drugs, alcohol abuse, allergy or sensitivity of mother. Most of autistic children, usually have difficulty in understanding social situations and expectations (Janzen, 1996, p.98).

It can be concluded from the theories above that autism is often referred as an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Children with autism spectrum have problems in the area of social interaction, communicating with others, and behavioral challenges. People with autism are not able to understand the perspective of others, or even to understand that other people have a perspective that could be different from their own. There are some causes of autism, such as poor nutrition, injury during pregnancy or drug and alcohol abuse of mother.

2.2 Language in Autistic Children

Caroll (1985,p.390) states that autistic children typically show very little interest in social interaction; to the contrary, they usually avoid eye contact with others. Basically, autistic children are more interested in an object than people, and will play for hours a time their mechanical toys. The autistic children dislike other people to disturb the common condition of their surroundings. Additionally, the autistic children are in panic when the surroundings or the environments change from their daily routines.

According to the website of autism.org.uk in 2013, abnormalities of language are frequently reported by parents as being the first problem to give concern. The babbling sounds made by autistic infants are rarely as extensive in range as those made by normal babies. The speech cadences that usually develop by the age of 9 to 12 months do not appear. It is a complex neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain. Autism symptoms can be present in a variety of combinations and may

accompany other disabilities. Some people with autism have normal levels of intelligence, while most people with autism have some level of intellectual disability, ranging from mild to severe. Indeed, they have some problems in communication and language development such as phonology, syntax, semantics, and pragmatics.

Bowen (2002,p.12) reports that autistic children have problems in semantic processing and the pragmatics of language use, they have disability in understanding and expressing their words or their ideas and have disability to use language in social setting. Actually, their sentence words have different meaning in a social context, for instance the autistic child says 'terima kasih' (thank you), when he gives a thing to others. In contrast, as normal children that sentence performed in receiving or apologizing. Autistic children loss of acquired speech that produce unusual noises of infantile screams, their voice louder than required and difficulty in understanding basic things and also no spontaneous initiation of speech and communication (www.psychnet_uk.com).

Autistic children have complete absence of speech or echolalia; there are two kinds of echolalia characters, delayed echolalia and immediate echolalia. Immediate echolalia is the repetition of words or phrases that occur immediately or very soon after the original words are spoken. An example of immediate echolalia is the autism child who repeats a question such as, "Do you want some juice?" rather than responding yes or no. In this case, the autism child prefer to choose for looking the glass and continues to hold out his hand and waits for a glass of juice. In fact, he has indicated "Yes, I want some juice". Meanwhile delayed echolalia is the repetition of words or phrases that are

echoed after the fact, even hours, days, weeks, or months later. An example of delayed echolalia is a child who might sing, "Happy Birthday" when someone new enters her home. (<http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/?pageId=535>)

Gillingham (1995, p.66) states that autistic children find different degrees of difficulty in learning words belonging to different grammatical categories. Nouns are easiest to teach, easily demonstrated, but they are very difficult with abstract words and function words such as 'to', 'for'. Motor system centrality all behavior in evolutionary terms is a matter of motor primacy, and all types of communication in relation to the autistic child should be examined from this perspective. Categorical perception production and perception of spoken language and other forms of communication must have involved together.

Basically, the speech of autistic children is clear and articulate, but Bortulacci, Pierre, Streiner and Eppel (1976, p.391) report that the phonology of autistic children is much poorer than normal children, they make some kinds of errors. The autistic children made various phonological errors (substitution, deletion, assimilation, and addition). For example, in case of weak syllable deletion "nana" for "banana" or "tato" for "potato". Another example for reduction "geen" for "green" and "poon" for "spoon". (www.psychnet-uk.com/dsm_iv/exp-lang-disorder.htm).

From the theories above the researcher can conclude that actually autism children often have problems with the complexities of language, including pragmatics (the use of language in social contexts) semantics (multiple meanings) and also pronunciation (the pitch, stress, and rhythm of speech). Echolalia is common faced by

autism children also whether it is the immediate or delayed echolalia. There are problems with comprehension of verbal information, following long verbal instructions, and remembering a sequence of instructions. Many children diagnosed with ASD are inattentive, easily distracted and anxious.

2.3. Learning Difficulties Faced by Autism Children.

According to the World Health Organization in 1992, learning difficulties deal with other disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, deafness, blindness, and behavioral disorders. Learning Difficulties according to National Institute for Learning Difficulties in 1999 is defined as neurobiological disorder in which a person's brain works is reduced significantly to understand new or complex information. These differences interfere a person's ability in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, or mathematical abilities.

According to Attwood in 1998, the example of learning difficulties include having coordination problems and motor difficulties (often called 'clumsy') such as be slow at dressing, difficult with basic tasks such as sweeping and cleaning. Another typical signs of learning difficulties include inability to concentrate well, pay attention and control behaviour, inability to do basic maths like addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, difficulty in the reading skills, they can read but not understand or cannot read at all and usually they tend to act without thinking which are accompanied by disorganized and impatient problems.

The degree of learning difficulties in autism spectrum disorders (ASD) tend to increase with the severity of ASD. Students with more severe learning difficulties typically exhibit more extreme social impairments. However, with the right support and strategies, children with learning difficulties can succeed in school and go on to successful, often distinguished careers later in life. Parents and teachers can help children with learning disabilities achieve success by encouraging their strengths, knowing their weaknesses, understanding the educational system, working with professionals and learning about their strategies for dealing with specific difficulties (Rodier, 2000).

Shortly, it can be concluded that learning difficulties are the condition when the person will find it harder to understand, learn and remember new things, and means that the person have problems with a range of things such as communication, and managing everyday tasks. Thus, in this study the writer uses Attwood's theory in order to analyze the data.

2.4. Visual Learning Style for Autism Children.

Cohen (1998) states that children with autism are visual rather than hearing or auditory and prefer alternative modes of communication such as pictures, rather than written words. This theory is supported by Grandin in 1995 who states that many people with autism are thought to be visual learners, so presenting information in a visual way can help to encourage and support people's communication, language development and ability to process information. It can also promote independence, build confidence and

raise self-esteem. Temple Grandin author of the book *Thinking in Pictures and Other Reports From My Life with Autism* promotes the use of visual supports when she explains how she processes information. Grandin (1995) states “Spatial words such as over and under had no meaning for me until I had a visual image to fix them in my memory”.

Hence, the writer can conclude that the most strongly recommended approach for teaching students with autism is through using visual learning style. In addition, it is difficult for the students with autism to attend to relevant information and to block out background stimulation. Using visual learning styles toward autism children enables the students to focus on the message.

2.5. Visual Supports for Helping Children with Autism.

Visual Supports is defined as the media for assisting children in their ability to maintain attention, understand spoken language, sequence and organize their environment (Hodgdon, 1995). Many people with ASD have difficulty in understanding, recalling, and using verbal communication (Hogdon, 1995). As stated by Quill (1995), people with ASD process visual support more easily than other modes of communication rather, this is because children with autism often demonstrate relative strengths in concrete thinking, rote memory, and understanding of visuospatial relationships, and difficulties in abstract thinking, social cognition, communication and attention. Therefore in this case, teachers use visual supports primarily to enhance

comprehension of language, prepare for environmental changes, and assist with the completion of specific tasks.

Visual Supports are used for students with autism in natural environments such as school, home and community with a large group of children, a small group, or an individual child. According to Hodgdon (2000), visual supports, when implemented correctly, allow students with autism the freedom to engage in life, regardless of impairment. Visual supports have been successfully used to teach children with autism a variety of skills to include literacy skills, encouraging positive behavior, and providing activity schedules. Roa and Gagie (2006) state that visual supports help bring in structure, routine, and sequence that many children with autism require in order to carry on their daily activities (p.27). In addition, Dalryaple (1989) declares that along with impaired communication, individuals with autism have trouble understanding social communication cues such as gestures, facial expression, body language, and voice intonation and therefore, as a rule of thumb, the more people with autism can be provided with visual cues, the better they will understand what they are supposed to do (Dalryaple, p.5). Consequently, visual supports have the potential to tremendously help children with autism and facilitate successful transitions between each activity.

From the theories above the writer can conclude that visual supports can be used to increase the understanding of language, environmental expectations, and to provide structure and support for individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD). Visual supports allow them to use this visual strength to process, organize, remember, and respond to information thereby allowing the individual to more easily participate in the

communicative process. Therefore, in this study the writer uses Quill and Hogdgon theories in answering the second problems of the study.

2.6. Previous Studies

Several studies had been done on teaching to the students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Suferers. In 2006, Sulistyawati, a student of Language and Letter Faculty of UIN Malang conducted “The receptive English language of autistic children at “A-Plus” Malang”. Eka (2006) observed study on receptive language disorder based on theory of Carroll’s (1985) concerning language disorder and response. Receptive language theory is the ability to understand or comprehend words and sentences that others use. She used qualitative method in her research. She found that giving receptive English language toward Autism Spectrum Disorder children could readily attract attention and arouse the Autism Spectrum Disorder children’s interest for learning English in the classroom.

The writer also used previous study from Edyburn (2007) entitles ‘Anxiety Disorders in Children with Learning Difficulties and Autism : A Review’. He conducted the research in one of autism therapy centres named St. Clair Catholic Northumbria England. In this study Gobriel found that there were some types of anxiety disorder which existed in students with autism when they were learning. He analyzed on how this kind of anxiety disorders influence their learning process which create some difficulties. In his research, Gobriel categorized the types of anxiety disorder in autism students using Wilson’s theory. He found that anxiety disorders do exist in children and

young people with autism and also found when autism children experienced higher rates of anxiety disorders it would influence their performance and their mood while they were learning which create the difficulties in learning process.

Based on the previous studies above there are some similarities and differences which exist. The similarities between Sulistyawati and the writer's study are the same object that is Autism children and also the same method that is qualitative method research. Sulistyawati used three autism students in A Plus autism therapy centers, in this study the writer also focused on the three autism children only in order to limit the data. The differences lie in the concept or the theory that is used. Sulistyawati conducted receptive language theory meanwhile the writer focused on learning difficulties which are faced by autism students and the use of visual supports in order to overcome with their learning difficulties.

Meanwhile, the similarities between Gobriel and the writer is the theory used that is learning difficulties theory. In Gobriel research, he related the learning difficulties with the anxiety disorders of autism children in St.Clair Catholic Northumbria England. However in this present study, the writer investigated the kinds of learning difficulties of three autistic children only and the way to overcome their difficulties. In here, the writer gave deeper analysis in terms of the characteristic of each children and also the visual supports which were used in understanding the new information from their teachers. Therefore, this study is conducted on the area of autism disorder and it is believed that this study gives additional resources for the next researchers who want to conduct on autism disorder's research.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter discusses some methods that are related to the topic, which are including research design, research subject, research instruments, data resources, data collections, and data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

Research method is defined as the ways, which are prepared to complete research.

Generally, there are two kinds of research design. They are quantitative research and qualitative research. We have known that quantitative research relies heavily on statistical research represent with numbers, while qualitative research relies heavily on narrative descriptions.

Based on the title discussed in this chapter, linguistics analysis focused on “The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome The Learning Difficulties faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School”. The writer uses a descriptive research, a qualitative non-experimental to complete the phenomenon of her research study.

Qualitative research study things in natural settings attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them (Denzin, 1994, p.2). Therefore, the data collection is taken as naturally occurring and ordinary events in natural setting of teaching in the field. In this study, the researcher came to the class to have participant observation after she got the approval from the headmaster of Autism

Laboratory UM School. The writer observed the autistic children; she watched, listened and paid attention to them.

3.2.Data Sources

The subjects of this study are three autistic children of the Autism Laboratory UM School. There were two kinds of instruments which were used in this research, first it was done through observation in the class and second through interview with the teachers and the parents of autism students. In this research, the writer observed the children from VA class only because in this class the ability of each child was better than that of the other classes. In this study, the writer did not observe the VI class, because the writer did not get permission from the Headmaster of Autism UM Laboratory School due to their preparation in facing National Examination. There were two classes in Autism UM Laboratory School, namely VA and VB, each of them consisted of 7 children. However, the writer took the children from VA only due to the recommendation from headmaster and the teacher in Autism UM Laboratory School, according to the headmaster in Autism UM Laboratory School, in VB Class the behaviour and the habits of the students could not be controlled, thus they categorized VB class as heavy class and it was impossible to conduct observation in this class. The other considerations that the writer took were the characteristics of the participants parents, as it had been known that there were some parents that being over sensitive and some of them were cooperative with this study. Therefore, the writer ensured with the headmaster and the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School about those things first.

The last the writer selected them based on their competence in academic skills and their

mid term examination score test. In this case, the writer took the highest score from all subjects because the good score would determine that those students were capable to be communicated and behaved well. From those criteria above there were three students were chosen by the writer. The children named Aan, Riezqy, and Raffi (complete profile can be seen in Appendix 1). All of them are males. The writer did not observe the subject's background of family and education, but she focused on their learning difficulties which were faced by autistic children and the visual supports which were used by the teachers in order to overcome with their learning difficulties.

The data were also taken from their teacher, and their parents. The parents of the students named Mrs. Rovita (Riezqy's mother), Mrs. Ninik (Aan's mother) and the last was Mr. Naufal (Raffi's father). The teacher from Autism UM Laboratory School named Alviyanti Fauziah, S.Psi (Mrs. Vivi), Hari Budianto, S.Pd. (Mr. Budi), and Luthansyah S.Pd. (Mr. Luthan). The sources of the data were obtained from natural behavior of autistic children while they are learning.

3.4. Data Collection

According to Sugiyono (2009, p.137), collecting the data can be done by various settings, sources, and ways. The technique collecting the data can be done by interviewing, distributing questionnaire, observation, and combination of them, means that the researcher can do two of those things, three of those things, or all of those things to get the more data. In this study, the writer used interviewing and observation to

the participant to collect the data. In collecting the data, there were some steps as follow:

1. Observing the participants of the research. The data were collected from observing the class of participants for about a month after the writer got permission from the headmaster named Dr. Immanuel Napitieuw, M.Pd. and also the parents of the autistic children. For observation in the class, the writer observed three times a week on Monday, Wednesday and Friday. In the data observation the writer did not provoke the autistic children to produce some utterances that she could obtain as her data sources. Particularly, for gathering the data, the writer observed the autism students while they were learning in the school. During the observation the writer also took some pictures and field notes on the visual supports that the teachers made for the students. In order to support the data, the writer also did observations in the participants' houses, while they were learning with their private teacher. This observation had been done in every Saturday and Sunday in a month because on these days the children had more free time.
2. Interviewing the teacher and the parents of Autistic children who have more understanding and interaction with them, as well as interview the individual's nature, habits, and asking the parents and the teachers in order to know how to overcome their learning difficulties and what kinds of visual supports for helping them while they were learning. (List of interview questions can be seen in Appendix 4)

3.5. Data Analysis

The qualitative research employs inductive data analysis. Thus, the writer analyzed the data collection inductively. The reason of using this kind of analysis was that the researcher followed the steps as follow :

1. Describing kinds of difficulties in their learning process based on their characteristic, behavior, communication and social relationship which were obtained from observation toward three autism students in the class VA of Autism UM Laboratory School and their houses. In this study the wrier used Attwood's theory to analyze the data .
2. Describing kinds of visual support which were used for students with autism in order to overcome the learning difficulties using Quill and Hogdon theories. In this steps the writer described it based on the interview which had been done through the teachers in the VA class of Autism UM Laboratory School named Mr. Hari Budianto, S.Pd., Mr.Luthansyah, S.Pd. and also Mrs. Alviyanti Fauziah, S.Psi and also the parents of the autistic children.
3. Drawing the conclusion which contains the learning difficulties which were faced by autism students and kinds of visual support used by them in order to overcome their learning difficulties.

CHAPTER IV

FINDING AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents two sections namely finding and discussion of the study.

The first section discusses the finding of the learning difficulties faced by Riezqy, Raffi and Aan and the kinds of visual supports that they used in order to overcome their learning difficulties. The second section are the discussion related to the interpretation of the finding of the study and also the media that have used for teachers working with students with autism . Each of those was discussed in detailed.

4.1 Finding

This study examines the learning difficulties performed by three autism students in the fifth grade of Autism UM Laboratory School and describes the kinds of visual supports which are used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School in order to overcome their learning difficulties. The data were collected by observing the participants in the class VA in about a month and interviewing the teachers and the parents of autism students. The participant of this study are Aan, Riezqy, and Raffi.

4.1.1 Learning Difficulties Faced by the Autism Students.

According to the World Health Organization in 1992, learning difficulties deal with other disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, deafness, blindness, and behavioral disorders. In this study, the writer presents the kinds of learning difficulties

which are faced by autism students. Learning Difficulties is defined as neurobiological disorder in which a person's brain works is reduced significantly to understand new or complex information. These differences interfere a person's ability in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, writing, or mathematical abilities (National Institute for Learning Difficulties, 1999). In this study, the writer presents seven kinds of learning difficulties which were faced by three autism students.

a) Tendency to Make Irrelevant Comments

In this study, the writer found that there was a big tendency of autism students to reveal the irrelevant comments when they were learning. For instance, when the teachers explained the material in a long verbal instruction in this example when explaining past continuous tenses, therefore they got confused and suddenly they uttered the irrelevant comments. It could be proven from Riezqy's utterances who liked to immitate the advertisement slogan on television in Cap Lang eucalyptus oil "*Buat anak kok coba-coba*". When Riezqy and other students did the irrelevant comments, it would affect on their learning process. As Bristol et al (1996,p.24) states that individuals with autism often have difficulties disengaging and shifting attention from one stimuli to the next, which may contribute to some of the observed rigidity and resistance to change.

As it could be seen during the observation that Aan, Riezqy, and Raffi were easily to utter irrelevant comment. When the autism students did this, the teachers showed video taped conversations which contained teaching rules and cues regarding turn-taking in conversation and when to reply, interrupt or change the

topic. Besides the teachers used pictures and scripts for a sequence of behaviors were presented, the students were given opportunities for repeated practice of the behavior, with immediate reinforcement.

b) Difficulty in Understanding Complex Language

As stated by Quill in 1995 that individuals with autism are having problems with comprehension of verbal information, following long verbal instructions, and remembering a sequence of instructions. The comprehension of language are context- specific. This theory related with Aan, Riezqy and Raffi who have difficulty with comprehension of oral and written information, such as following directions or difficulty in comprehending complex and long sentences. They couldnot remember what the teacher said easily. It could be proven when the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School asked them to memorize moral principle of Pancasila and the pattern in Past Continous Tenses, they could not do it maximally. It happened also when they were obliged to read the academic text which contain complex nominal groups and as the result in their learning process the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School pausedbetween instruction when they gave task toward Autism and after that they checked for understanding. Besides, the teachers also encouraged the student to ask for an instruction to be repeated, simplified or written down in white board in order to minimize their difficulties. Besides, the teachers also avoided in using metaphors and words with double meaning in order to make the students are

easy in understanding the material. Meanwhile the teachers always teach information explicitly and provide clear explanations toward them.

c) Having Poor Concentration

In this study, the writer found that the autism students have difficulty in sustaining the attention from their teachers. This situation related with the theory from David (1986, p.78) states that individuals with autism present with a range of difficulties with attention moreover specific deficits in attention have major implications for development in other areas such as communication and social development. In this study, Aan, Riezqy and Raffi were easily distracted by the environment around them such as the sounds of footstep, cars and so on. For instance, Riezqy, Raffi and Aan were easily distracted when someone was coming to their class. They would pay attention for her or him and it took few hours to get their concentration was back to the material. Therefore the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School have particular strategies in order to overcome with their learning difficulty. The strategies include by providing frequent teacher feedback and redirection toward the autism students, always seat in the front of classroom, and using non-verbal cues to get their attention.

d) Poor in Organizational Skills.

The other learning difficulties which are found by the writer is that the autism students are poor in organizational skills such as they forgot to put their assignments, they could not remember the sequence order by their teachers or they forgot to bring their homework. It did not only happen in the school but also in their house, for instance when there was a schedule for music private course somehow they should be reminded by their parents. As mentioned by Attwood in 1998 that autism tend to be act without thinking which are accompanied by disorganized and impatient problems. As a result, the teachers have some strategies for them such as they used schedules and calendars in the classroom to help the students to use “to do” list and checklist (the picture can be seen in Appendix 2), and use picture cues in lockers in order to remind them.

e) Easily Stressed due to Inflexibility

The other difficulties which are found by the writer is students with autism frequently have difficulty with the unknown and fear the unpredictable. It is difficult for them to take in all of the information presented by a new situation, determine what the expectations are, and then generate appropriate responses. In this study, the writer found this situation related to Aan, Raffi and Riezqy when their normal bus route to school was changed, they refused to get off the bus until the teacher came to the bus and talked him into the school. This situation was supported by Rodier (2000) states that students with ASD

experience difficulty with change. Thus collaborative planning are necessary for students with ASD to alleviate some of the challenges for students during transitions such as entry to school and between grades.

f) Poor in Motor Coordination.

One of the characteristic in students with autism is they are poor in their motor coordination as it is stated by Grandin (1995, p.58) that It appears that at one end of the spectrum, autism is primarily a cognitive disorder, and at the other end, it is primarily a sensory processing disorder. At a midpoint along the spectrum, autistic symptoms appear to be caused by equal amounts of cognitive and sensory problems. It could be proven from the observation that Aan, Riezqy and Raffi could not write the sentences easily and orderly (untidy writing) and they always take one up to two hours only for writing notes on the whiteboard.

Another example when the autism students wanted to tie their shoelaces, they took around thirty minutes. Based on the interview which had been done with the teachers and the parents of autism students, the visual motor coordination and fine motor movements that were required in written activities extremely frustrating and diverted the autism students attention from the content of what they are writing to the physical process of print production. The teachers need to assist them while they do writing activity. Therefore there are some strategies for them such as the teachers give extra time for them, they also reduce long writing speed into accounts when giving assignments, and in some lesson, they

use the computer for written assignments, as the autism students are having more skilled at using a keyboard than writing. In order to reinforce their motor system, Autism UM Laboratory School also provides the students to be involved in fitness activities regularly such as swimming and basketball.

g) Getting Difficulty in Mathematic.

Other kinds of learning difficulties which are faced by autism students was having math difficulties as it is supported from Grandin (1995,p.102) that a students who is autism perform numerical computations relatively easily, but be unable to solve mathematical problem. During the observation the writer found that for instance, when the teacher asked them to finish the algebra formula they could not solve it, moreover they were getting anxious and furious. Based on the interview with the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School, there are several reasons why mathematics becomes challenging aspect. This lesson especially for the language of mathematics instruction has its own vocabulary, and the precision of instruction and usage of terms can vary from one teacher to another.

Second, along with the verbal, ortographic, and represantational expressions of number, there is also the symbolic representation in the forms of numeral. Third, mathematical operations are usually performed with a pencil. Students with autism have fine motor difficulties and learning to form numerals and produce them on paper may be challenging. As the solution for this problem usually the teachers provide meaningful reinforcement in of praise to tangible objects

that increase the behaviour the students is to learn. Another method which is implemented is that by increasing the level of difficulty gradually and scaffolding or supporting learning particularly with visual information rather than oral explanations. This method was believed in minimizing the student's difficulties.

4.1.2 Kinds of Visual Supports used by Students with Autism.

Many people with ASD have difficulty in understanding, recalling, and using verbal communication (Bowen, 2002). Some people with ASD process visual support more easily than other modes of communication (Quill, 1995). In this study, the writer found that teachers used visual supports successfully in applying their actions, behavior challenges, organization, transitions from one activity to another, and also communication difficulties. In the school and at home, the teachers and the parents used visual support toward Riezqy, Aan and Raffi primarily to enhance comprehension of language, for preparing the environmental changes, and for the completion of specific tasks. Visual supports were used in natural environments (school, home and rooms). When using visual supports, the teachers and the parents used different means to provide support. In here the visual supports were in form of real objects, photographs, line drawings, or words. During the observation, the writer also found that the teachers and the parents used different types of visual supports (e.g., visual schedules, rule reminders, and visual task analysis). Several different types of Visual representations

are frequently used in homes and schools in order to make Riezqy, Aan and Raffi are easy in understanding the information.

a) Real Objects

During the observation, the writer found that tangible representations of activities could convey messages to students with Autism Spectrum Disorder regarding what activity would occur next or what choices were available. For example in this case, the teachers selected the objects with the students. When the students played on the yard then the teachers gave the relevant object related to this specific environment (e.g. the balls or the marbles). This method helped students with autism felt more in control and helped strengthen the connection between the tangible object and the activity as it could be proven during the observation with providing the relevant object, the tendency of Riezqy, Aan and Raffi got confused and panic were descended. They were likely to be independent because the object was already exist, they did not need to ask again toward their teacher about the instruction and the activity that they should do. The other examples that the writer found during the observation, when the teachers wanted to explain about the parts of the flower such as stem, branch, leaves and flowers in science class. Teachers brought the real objects of flower in front of the class in order to make the students were easy to visualize it. Therefore, by providing real objects toward the autism students, it made the students were easy in comprehending the material.



Figure 4.1. Real Objects of Flowers

b) Photographs

The second media which was used is digital photographs, clip arts or pictures retrieved from the Internet were used in teaching students with autism because from the pictures, it could be used to represent activities and routines. Nevertheless, pictures or photographs were concrete method to use when designing visual schedules for the students with autism. It could be proven during the observation that Riezqy, Aan and Raffi were happy when the teacher started the lesson by showing the photographs first in order to give them a review about what kinds of activity that they would do. For instance in this case, during English class teachers brought the photographs in order to help the autism students understood the material “my daily activities”. By providing the pictures which were combined with the vocabulary in English, it could help the students understood the material. In this study, the writer also found that photograph was the kinds of visual support which was mostly used in Autism UM Laboratory School. Based on the interview toward the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School

photographs was simple and easy to be made, if they need the photographs, they directly found it on internet and printed out, moreover it was cheaper.



Figure 4.2 Photographs

c) Words

Another media was words, in this case words acted as visual supports, it was used alone or paired with photographs, drawing or objects to facilitate print awareness and beginning with reading skills. By pairing words with other visual representations, it could help the students with ASD ease the transition of the task, because a print-only task looked like a foreign language to students with autism, but pairing print with pictures or objects helped bridge the gap for latter learning, it could be seen during the observation that Aan, Riezqy and Raffi were really indolent when their teachers asked them to read the academic texts therefore the teachers had some strategies such as pairing the material that they learned with the pictures and photographs. By using this method, their learning interest got increased. The teachers not only implemented this

method in the class, but also when the students got panic when their school bus did not come on time, therefore the students could show the emotion cards in order to describe what they felt to their teachers and they could go to the relaxing rooms for calming down.



Figure 4.3. Words

d) Visual Schedules

Visual schedules (e.g., daily schedule, minischedule) helped students with autism anticipated the order of activities and events and also it was believed by their teachers could increase independence. In the school, visual schedules included the illustration about what activity was taking place, specification about what activity would occur next, indication when an activity was finished, and also as an indication of any changes that might occur in the regular schedule. As stated by Carroll in 1985 p.390 additionally, the autistic children are in panic when the surroundings or the environments change from their daily routines. Thus, by providing visual schedules

which they can be seen in everytime it can minimize their tendency in panic and feeling worried.














Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
preschool 	Speech 	preschool 	preschool 	park 	home 	grandma's 
television 	McDonald's 	television 	television 	shopping 	swim class 	

Figure. 4.4. Visual Schedules

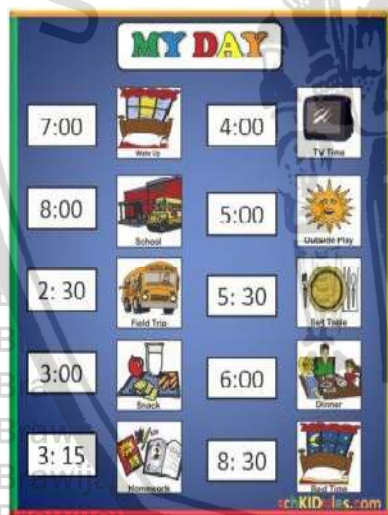


Figure 4.5 Visual Schedules

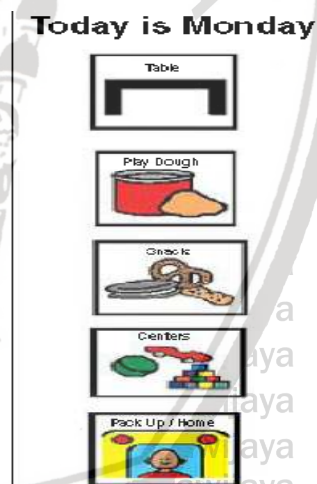


Figure 4.6 Visual Schedules

e) Visuals to structure the Environment

Based on the the explanation from the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory

School stated that using visuals to structure the environment can help students with autism more independently in the natural environment and decrease their need for adult prompts in completing daily routine. In the Autism UM Laboratory School, this kind of visual had been already implemented toward their students, through images and symbols to visually organize the environment and to represent the specific places where items belong. For example, the teachers placed laminated photographs of different-size blocks on the shelves to organize the block center during cleanup and enable Aan, Raffi, and Riezqy to independently put the blocks away in the correct location. Meanwhile in the house, the parents of Aan, Riezqy and Raffi placed picture labels on shelves and drawers in the playroom to help their children clean up at night by putting each toy in its place before bedtime. The other examples of Visuals to structure the environment in the Autism UM Laboratory School:

1. A basket which acted as notes to the teachers who had instruction for their students, so they could attach to it.
2. Student's locker for items to be placed in the student's backpack which was labeled with names and digital pictures.
3. A sign-in sheet contained the students's photographs and a space to mark off attendance.

f) Visual Scripts or Social Stories.

As stated by Bristol in 1996 page 21 that autism is a life long developmental disability that prevents people from understanding what they see, hear and otherwise sense. This results in severe problems with social relationships, communication, and behavior. Autistic people have difficulty in communicating thoughts and needs verbally and non verbally. Thus from the statement above, there should be special treatments for autistic children in order to make their communication run well. One of them was visual scripts. Visual scripts was written scenario, role-play or examples that students with autism could use to initiate conversations and interactions with others. It was important to use visual scripts toward students with autism, because visual scripts were especially useful in promoting social skills with students who display social avoidance, social indifference, or social awkwardness. The writer found in the Autism UM Laboratory School that the teachers used social stories to clarify social topics that students with autism may not fully understand or may interpret inappropriately. In this case, social stories which was used by the teachers focused on demonstrating appropriate social behaviour. The teachers used social stories when Aan, Riezqy and Raffi did not want to share their toys with others, turn taking in using toilet or decreasing an inappropriate behaviour such as screaming or yelling during long time. Thus, the teachers used the social stories levels of talking Figure 4.7. in order to ask the students controlled their talking.

Other Visual scripts that used were social scripts which contained the written words that telling the students how to respond in a social situation and comic strip conversations. Comic scripts here means that illustration ongoing communication between two or more people as it can be seen in Figure 4.7. Visual Scripts have the functions for assisting students in understanding social situations, solving problems, and preparing for conversations.

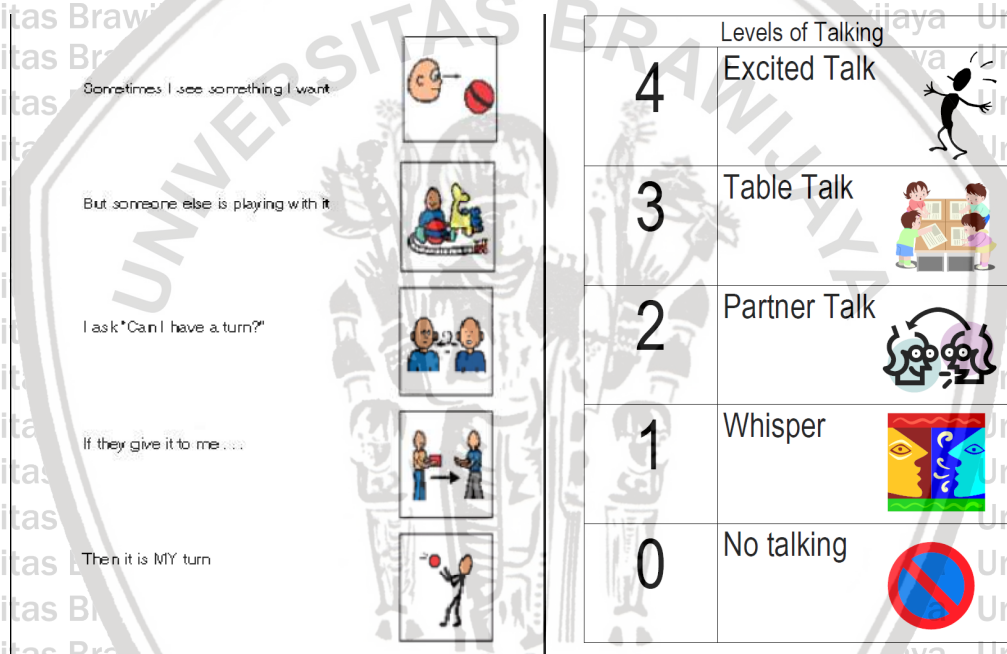


Figure 4.7 Social Stories



Figure 4.8 Social Story

e) Rule Reminder Cards

Rule reminder cards were type of visual support that used to visually present expectations for behaviour in a variety of settings. For example visually representing classrooms expectations such as a poster boards with photographs or line drawings and words. Through this, it helped the students with autism prepare the detail tools which are usually forgotten by them. As mentioned by Attwood in 1998 that autism tend to be act without thinking which are accompanied by disorganized and impatient problems. therefore by giving the reminder cards it can helped them to minimize their disorganized problems. Another example that the writer found in the class was a “to do list” rule reminder cards about what they should usually bring in the Math lesson which include several picture and words as it could be seen in Figure.4.8, the teachers used it when they asked their students to bring some tools such as ruler, calculator, textbook,

and notebook. During the observation, the writer found that the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School used rule reminder cards before the lesson was begun and they distributed this cards toward their students therefore Riezqy, Aan and Raffi could prepare the lesson well.



Figure 4.8 Rule Reminder Cards

f) Visual Task Analysis

Visual Task Analysis is here as a step by step support to facilitate a student's independence in completing task from their teachers, such as putting the garbage in the dustbin and also complex task that were composed of multiple, sequential steps such as

drawing the car. Based on interview toward the teachers of Autism UM Laboratory School providing students with an accessible, visual reference guide, it enhanced student's independence and decreased or eliminated adult prompting. Moreover, through visual task analysis, it was useful when facing students who forgot or were confused the order of a multistep process or response-chain skill, who became easily distracted from the noises or who had dependent on their parents thus by providing this visual task analysis Riezqy, Aan and Raffi were more dependent and they could easily follow the instruction easily. In this Figure 4.9. below, the teachers put this picture in the self management class when they wanted to teach the students how to brush their teeth.



Figure 4.9 Visual Task Analysis

4.2. Discussion

After having the finding of the learning difficulties which are faced by autism students and also kinds of visual supports which are used by them, discussion was

provided to make the interpretation of the finding. The discussion deals with the problems of the study which discuss the kinds of learning difficulties which are faced by autism students and also the use of visual supports toward autism students in order to overcome with their learning difficulties.

4.2.1 Kinds of Learning Difficulties faced by Autism Students in Autism UM

Laboratory School.

According to the World Health Organization in 1992, learning difficulties deal with other disabilities such as mental retardation, autism, deafness, blindness, and behavioral disorders. As stated also by Carroll in 1985 that autistic children typically show very little interest in social interaction; to the contrary, they usually avoid eye contact with others, and more interested in an object than people. Seeing the nature of every autistic children above, therefore in this case autism students need special treatments which differ from the normal children. Directly, this kinds of behavior problems which are existed in autism students will influence in their learning which create difficulties. As stated also by Rodier in 2000, the degree of learning difficulties in autism spectrum disorders (ASD) tend to increase with the severity of ASD. Students with more severe learning difficulties typically exhibit more extreme social impairments. However, with the right support and strategies, children with learning difficulties can succeed in school and go on to successful, often distinguished careers later in life. Parents and teachers can help children with learning difficulties achieve success by encouraging their strengths, knowing their weaknesses, understanding the educational system, working with

professionals and learning about their strategies for dealing with specific difficulties. In this study revealed that the autism students in Autism UM Laboratory School faced some learning difficulties which included tendency to make irrelevant comments, difficulty in understanding complex language, having poor concentration, poor in organizational skills, easily stressed due to inflexibility, poor in motor coordination, and getting difficulty in mathematic. From seven kinds of learning difficulties which were found by the writer, it could be concluded that four of the learning difficulties which belong to Attwood's theory existed in Aan, Riezqy and Raffi. Meanwhile the three other learning difficulties, namely tendency to make irrelevant comment, easily stressed due to inflexibility and also poor in organizational skills which were found in the three participants were not mentioned in Attwood's theory. Based on the learning difficulties found, planning every single method for the students with autism were necessary, because these students have significant differences from most of other students in learning style, communication, and social skills development, and often challenging behaviours. Students with learning difficulties form one of the most vulnerable groups of people in society. This means that there needs to be a variety of support available designed to meet the specific needs of the person (Carnaby, 2007).

This study related with the previous studies of Edyburn (2007) who believed that autism is more common among individuals with learning difficulties. In Gobriel's study he analyzed kinds of anxiety disorders which were existed in autism students in ST.Clair Catholic Northumbria England, he revealed that actually this anxiety disorders which was embedded in autism students would influence to their learning process which

created some difficulties. In this present study the writer found that some kinds of learning difficulties which were existed in the autism students in Autism UM Laboratory School also influenced by their anxiety disorder. It could be proven on the point of easily stressed due to inflexibility. These types learning difficulties were happened when they were in panic condition or anxious with their change of daily routine. Meanwhile this present study also related with Sulistyawati (2006) although she concerned on their receptive language of autism students, she stated when she did observation and interview with autism students in the school, she found that they were facing some kinds of learning difficulties also which later on influenced with their receptive language competence. Therefore in Sulistyawati's study by giving receptive English language which was correct toward autism students, it could increase their attention and interest for learning English in the classroom.

4.2.2 Kinds of Visual Supports used by Autism Students in Autism UM Laboratory School.

As indicated through the literature review, there is a wide range of interventions that incorporate the use of visuals for teaching young students with autism. Depending on the area of development, skill, or behavior that is the focus of learning will determine which interventions are used. Many people with ASD have difficulty understanding, recalling, and using verbal communication (Hogdon, 1995). Therefore, in here the autism students need the visual supports as media for helping them in the learning process. As stated by Quill also (1995) that people with ASD process visual support

more easily than other modes of communication rather, this is because children with autism often demonstrate relative strengths in concrete thinking, rote memory, and understanding of visuospatial relationships, and difficulties in abstract thinking, social cognition, communication and attention. For children with ASD who are unable to communicate via verbal language clearly, visual supports offer them a way to become a part of their own culture and to learn. A few facts that need to be taken into consideration when teaching individuals with ASD are: (1) individuals with autism are visual learners; they see words in pictures, compared to hearing them, basically individuals with autism process visual information more efficiently than auditory information (Grandin, 1995) and (2) educators or teachers are responsible for meeting the needs of all students while providing a safe environment that facilitates learning.

Therefore, when teaching students with autism, educators need to take into consideration the characteristics associated with autism and determine the instructional techniques that support the individual learning style of the student with ASD (Quill, 1997). Teachers must also note that individuals with ASD have a wide variety of needs and abilities that require specialized individual instructional techniques (Mesibov & Shea, 1996; Tissot & Evans, 2003). It is beneficial to focus on the strengths of individuals with autism, which is that they are extremely visual; their world is heard in seeing pictures. The results of this research support Hodgdon's (1999) statement regarding individuals with ASD not understanding the world around them, "They tend to be visual learners living in a very auditory world" (p.65). Thus, the teachers in the Autism UM Laboratory School used this method to be applied for their students in order to help them with their learning

difficulties. In this school there are some varieties of visual supports which are used such as real objects, photographs, words, visual schedules, social stories, rule reminder cards and visual task analysis. Through visual supports, students with autism begin to be able to communicate directly with their teachers, parents and friends. Visual supports can support educational activities by enabling communication directly or by providing visual supports by which a student may learn other more advanced means of communicating. Visual supports provide hints or clues to help a student better approach communication acts or educational challenges in the future. Visual supports can also provide physical or intellectual aids to solve problems that a child is simply not yet developmentally advanced to handle. Another advantages are visual supports can attract and hold attention thus enabling the students to focus on the messages, reduce anxiety, make abstract concept more concrete, help prompt the students, and help the student to express their thought Learning by using new visual support is a significant goal for individual children because in this case, students with autism are having learning difficulties, thus teachers and parents appreciated the use of visual supports. Meanwhile, the kinds of visual supports mostly used by the teachers in Autism UM Laboratory School was photographs because by using photographs it was easy to find the photographs through the internet and they could directly printed out moreover it was cheaper and more flexible to be applied in the classroom.

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PARTICIPANTS PROFILE

The following three case studies have been made to show three characteristic of students with autism disorder.

1. Riezqy's Profile

Riezqy has entered his fifth year at Autism UM Laboratory School. He received diagnosis of autism in communication when he was four years old.

Riezqy has been slow in development. He stood at 20 months and walked at 23 months. He developed pattern of rocking, which continued until he was four years old. At that age, Riezqy developed a behaviour pattern of tantrums that include screaming, crying, giggling, and throwing things on the floor. Riezqy becomes anxious at school and at home when the environment became busy or noisy. Interestingly, the noises of loud music and running feet in the yard of his school does not bother him. He has tantrums when he is over stimulated or when he does not get what he wants, for example when he did not get permission from the teachers to play with his bike, he was so angry at that time. However this kind of condition is easily redirected or calms in a quieter area of the classroom. Stroking his head gently usually calms him. He appears to have a diminished response to pain; for example, when he fell and bruised his knee, he did not seem to notice any pain.

Riezqy enjoys manipulating sensory play objects such as toys, but he does not play functionally with toys in the class or at home unless directed by his parents. He likes to imitate the advertisement on television. For example :

“*Buat anak kok coba-coba*” (Slogan of Cap Lang eucalyptus oil).

Riezqy’s attention span varies, but it is especially short for activities with a social component, such as circle time or group stories. He is currently communicating through echolalia, gestures, and limited functional speech: “No”, “I need help”, and “Get the other one”. He make transitions calmly when he is given advance notice of change. Riezqy’s parents are particularly interested in the development of Riezqy’s expressive and receptive communication skills.

Riezqy does not need verbal prompts to have breakfast, lunch and dinner. He can do it by himself. Riezqy sometimes runs to the outside, when the doors in the house or the school do not close, therefore parents and school staff need to be vigilant about doors being closed and to ensure that Riezqy is supervised closely when he is in the playground.

2. Aan’s Profile

Aan is currently into a fifth grade classroom. He was diagnosed with autism disorder after many years of being mis-labelled as “emotionally disturbed with acting-out behaviour”. He has developed oral language very well, but his very rapid speech without much inflection is difficult to understand. He always uses oral language without ensuring that anyone is listening, so communication is not received.

He has significant progress in reading comprehension, which affects his success in English, Social Studies and so on. He can master concepts that are represented visually. He is particularly good at using formulas in Math but has difficulty knowing which formulas to use for solving a mathematical problem.

Aan is very interested in cars and auto machine. He is having rote memory about the years of cars made and also the price of each cars. In his rooms there are two cupboard which contain so many books, magazines, and also anything information related with cars and auto machine. As stated by his sister that all of the books which are exist in his cupboards, he has already remembered and understood it excellently. Aan likes drawings, his drawings especially related with cars.

Aan has some strengths as well as difficulties in social relationships. Family relationships are good. He follows family routines well as long as they are predictable. Aan loves to work independently on the class and he always gets an excellent score in English and also Social studies. Aan has serious problems with social judgement, cannot handle his money wisely (will give it to anyone who asks for it), and becomes anxious when routines at home or school are changed. When he is anxious, Aan pulls his ears and talks so fast about the machine in the car. For example, when his normal bus route to school was changed, he refused to get off the bus and continued to speak fast again about auto machine until the teacher came to the bus and talked him into the school.

Aan's preoccupation with the car and auto machine can be a problem at times. He does not realize that other people might not be similarly interested. He often tries to start conversations in cars machine and does not understand when other people are not interested and get bored with his explanations. His parents never give him mobile phone because when Aan brings his mobile phone, he has been known to call the showroom's car in every hour only to talk with the sales director about the newest car which has been released.

3. Raffi's Profile

Raffi is a 12 years old student. He was late in achieving some of the developmental milestone in his early childhood. He started to walk at 18 months and was slow to talk. His early language was almost exclusively repetitive echolalic speech with limited communicative message. As a young child Raffi's play was repetitive with seeming unawareness of others. He does not like to be touched also or to be close to other children, but he is agitated when separated from his father. He has an unusual interest in small objects such as mollusk and their shell and any kinds of objects related with sea. He also likes to read about anything related with oceanography. He is good in swimming activity also. He always becomes the first winner in every swimming competition which is held by Autism UM Laboratory School.

When Raffi was three years old his father consulted with a clinical psychologist. The family has seen the psychologist regularly, and his father has

participated in parent training in behavior management. Raffi was evaluated by a speech and language therapist at age three and has had ongoing speech therapy also.

At age 10, Raffi still has behaviors that require significant support. He functions in the classroom with adapted assignments and an individualized visual schedule. The classroom routines include a token (symbol and direction) managed by teacher assistant assigned to the class, with reinforcers to maintain appropriate behavior. Raffi is highly inflexible about the schedule and becomes aggressive about transitions if unexpected changes are made. Problematic behavior have decreased since the beginning of Grade 4. The behaviors of concern to the teacher, teacher assistant, and Raffi's father include agitated response if other people around fail to use specific cues, ignoring adult direction, and somehow yelling. Raffi has had interrupted sleep patterns and is showing the same behaviours of concern at home. His father is having difficulty managing him. Raffi also has poor eye contact when he talks to people outside his family.

Raffi's academic skills are above average in his class. For his reading skills Raffi shows excellent progress, however he gets difficulty in Math problem solving, and it appears to be at the fifth grade. Most academic tasks which was given by his teacher can be adapted for Raffi. It is difficult for teachers to evaluate his knowledge using standardized tests or criterion reference measure because he may refuse to do unfamiliar tasks.

Raffi likes to make detailed drawings, but tends to repeat the same subjects, usually the oceans, the shells and fish. He likes watching movies related with the sea animal and he can watch it again without feeling bored.



CONSENT FORM OF THE PARTICIPANT

Interview is an instrument to know closely at the kinds of learning difficulties and kinds of visual supports faced by autism students. In interview processes, the characteristics of the students becomes an important point to observe. In this research, the writer focuses about kinds of learning difficulties faced by autism students and kinds of visual supports used by autism students. This research is expected to guide the reader to understand and raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder's problem.

“The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome the Learning Difficulties Faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School (A Case Study of Three ASD Students)”

Trisakti Agriani - 105110100111020

My name is Ninik Suwarni as the parents of Aan. Hereby, I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to take part in the above research voluntarily on Trisakti Agriani's thesis. Furthermore, I agree for publication of the results that I take part in

- ☐ Thesis
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Thesis and Journal (Recommended)

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating. I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within one week of the test, in which case the material will be deleted.

Ninik Suwarni, S.Pd.

Full Name the parents of participants

Date

Signature

CONSENT FORM OF THE PARTICIPANT

Interview is an instrument to know closely at the kinds of learning difficulties and kinds of visual supports faced by autism students. In interview processes, the characteristics of the students becomes an important point to observe. In this research, the writer focuses about kinds of learning difficulties faced by autism students and kinds of visual supports used by autism students. This research is expected to guide the reader to understand and raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder's problem.

“The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome the Learning Difficulties Faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School (A Case Study of Three ASD Students)”

Trisakti Agriani - 105110100111020

My name is Noval Samsudin,S.E as the parents of Raffi. Hereby, I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to take part in the above research voluntarily on Trisakti Agriani's thesis. Furthermore, I agree for publication of the results that I take part in

- ☐ Thesis
- ☐ Journal
- ☐ Thesis and Journal (Recommended)

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating. I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within one week of the test, in which case the material will be deleted.

Noval Samsudin,S.E.

Full Name the parents of participants

Date

Signature

CONSENT FORM OF THE PARTICIPANT

Interview is an instrument to know closely at the kinds of learning difficulties and kinds of visual supports faced by autism students. In interview processes, the characteristics of the students becomes an important point to observe. In this research, the writer focuses about kinds of learning difficulties faced by autism students and kinds of visual supports used by autism students. This research is expected to guide the reader to understand and raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder's problem.

“The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome the Learning Difficulties Faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School (A Case Study of Three ASD Students)”

Trisakti Agriani - 105110100111020

My name is Rovita as the parents of Riezqy. Hereby, I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

I agree to take part in the above research voluntarily on Trisakti Agriani's thesis. Furthermore, I agree for publication of the results that I take part in

- ☒ Thesis
- ☒ Journal
- ☒ Thesis and Journal (Recommended)

I understand that I can withdraw from the study, at any time, whether before it starts or while I am participating. I understand that I can withdraw permission to use the data within one week of the test, in which case the material will be deleted.

Rovita

Full Name the parents of participants

Date

Signature

Appendix 4: List of Interview Questions

LIST OF INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Bagaimana karakter Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi ketika di sekolah dan di rumah?
2. Hal apa yang disukai dan tidak disukai oleh Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi ?
3. Ketika mengikuti pelajaran di sekolah, kesulitan belajar apa saja yang ditemui oleh Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi?
4. Bagaimana cara mengatasi kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi oleh Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi?
5. Hal apa saja yang telah Bapak dan Ibu terapkan di rumah untuk mengatasi kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi oleh Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi?
6. Media Visual apa saja yang telah Bapak dan Ibu guru buat untuk mengurangi kesulitan belajar yang dihadapi oleh Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi ketika di sekolah?
7. Bagaimana hasil yang dicapai setelah Bapak dan Ibu guru menggunakan media visual tersebut kepada Aan,Riezqy dan Raffi? Apakah efektif?
8. Manfaat apa saja yang didapat oleh Riezqy,Aan dan Raffi ketika menggunakan media visual tersebut?
9. Jenis media visual apa yang sering Bapak/Ibu guru gunakan ketika mengajar?mengapa?



Appendix 5: Berita Acara Bimbingan Skripsi



KEMENTERIAN PENDIDIKAN NASIONAL UNIVERSITAS BRAWIJAYA FAKULTAS ILMU BUDAYA

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BERITA ACARA BIMBINGAN SKRIPSI

Nama : Trisakti Agriani
NIM : 105110100111020
Program Studi : Sastra Inggris
TopikSkripsi : Psikolinguistik
JudulSkripsi : The Use of Visual Supports to Overcome The Learning Difficulties faced by Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Sufferers in Autism UM Laboratory School (A Case Study of Three ASD Students)
TanggalMengajukan : 01 Oktober 2013
TanggalSelesai : 17 Januari 2013
Pembimbing : I. Fatimah, M.Appl.Ling.
II. DidikHartono,S.S, M.Pd.
KeteranganKonsultasi :

No	Tanggal	Materi	Pembimbing	Paraf
1.	01Oktober 2013	Pengajuanjudulskripsi	Pembimbing I	
2.	05 Oktober 2013	Pengajuan BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	
3.	10 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	
4.	17 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	
5.	18 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	
6.	22 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	

Appendix 5: Berita Acara Bimbingan Skripsi

7.	23 Oktober 2013	ACC BAB I-III	Pembimbing I	
8.	18 Oktober 2012	Pengajuan BAB I	Pembimbing II	
9.	20 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB I	Pembimbing II	
10.	21 Oktober 2013	Pengajuan BAB II	Pembimbing II	
11.	23 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB II	Pembimbing II	
12.	25 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB II	Pembimbing II	
13.	26 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB II	Pembimbing II	
14.	26 Oktober 2013	Pengajuan BAB III	Pembimbing II	
15.	28 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB III	Pembimbing II	
16.	31 Oktober 2013	Revisi BAB III	Pembimbing II	
17.	01 November 2013	ACC BAB I-III	Pembimbing II	
18.	06 November 2013	Seminar Proposal	Pembimbing I	
19.	06 November 2013	Seminar Proposal	Pembimbing II	
20.	08 November 2013	Revisi Seminar Proposal	Pembimbing I	
21.	08 November 2013	Revisi Seminar Proposal	Pembimbing II	
22.	20 November 2013	Pengajuan BAB IV-V	Pembimbing I	
23.	26 November 2013	Revisi BAB IV-V	Pembimbing I	
24.	03 Desember 2013	Revisi BAB IV-V	Pembimbing I	
25.	04 Desember 2013	ACC Seminar Hasil (BAB IV-V)	Pembimbing I	
26.	04 Desember 2013	Revisi BAB IV-V	Pembimbing II	
27.	31 Desember 2013	Seminar Hasil	Pembimbing I	
28.	07 Januari 2014	Revisi BAB IV-V	Pembimbing I	
29.	15 Januari 2014	ACC Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing I	
30.	15 Januari 2014	ACC Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing II	
31.	17 Januari 2014	Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing I	
32.	20 Januari 2014	Revisi Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing II	
33.	22 Januari 2014	Revisi Ujian Skripsi	Pembimbing I	

Appendix 5: Berita Acara Bimbingan Skripsi

Telah dievaluasi dan diuji dengan nilai



Malang, 23 Januari 2014

Dosen Pembimbing I

Dosen Pembimbing II

Fatimah, M.App.Ling.
NIP. 19711252002122002

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Mengetahui,

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