

# Using Social Story for Autistic Students to Improve Student's Behavior in the Class at Australian Independent School in Academic Year 2020

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## **Abstract**

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. To deal with behavior management of an autistic student, the teacher must implement particular strategy. This study aimed at implementing social story for autistic students for behavior management. The problems of the study were formulated as (1) how teacher constructs a social story based on lesson plan or SMART, (2) how teacher implements social story (3) how teacher assesses students' behavior. This study was qualitative case study analyzed the phenomenon of teaching using social story to improve student's behavior in the class by teachers in Australian Independent School Bali. The subject of the study was a teacher at Australian Independent School Bali. The data were collected through observation, recording, interview, and document analysis. The findings show that (1) the teacher conducts lesson plan or SMART target that adopted from the students IEP, (2) the teachers practice to using social story for the autistic students to improve the student's behavior based on the lesson plan through various methods, namely storytelling, drilling, giving project and task, playing, and feedback and (3) the teacher assesses the students behavior through process oriented assessment using observation, anecdote note, and portfolio. It can be concluded that the teacher of Australian Independent School Bali implements social story for behavior management of autistic students.

**Keywords:** autistic student, behavior management, social story, strategy

## **Abstrak**

Autisme adalah gangguan perkembangan mental yang kompleks yang biasanya muncul selama tiga tahun pertama kehidupan. Untuk menghadapi manajemen perilaku siswa autis, guru harus menerapkan strategi tertentu. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengimplementasikan cerita sosial bagi siswa autis untuk manajemen perilaku. Rumusan masalah penelitian ini adalah (1) bagaimana guru merancang cerita sosial berdasarkan RPP atau SMART, (2) bagaimana guru mengimplementasikan cerita sosial (3) bagaimana guru menilai perilaku siswa. Penelitian ini merupakan studi kasus kualitatif yang menganalisis fenomena pengajaran menggunakan cerita sosial untuk meningkatkan perilaku siswa di kelas oleh guru siswa berkebutuhan khusus di Australian Independent School Bali. Subjek penelitian ini adalah seorang guru siswa berkebutuhan khusus di Australian Independent School Bali. Pengumpulan data dilakukan melalui observasi, pencatatan, wawancara, dan analisis dokumen. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) guru melakukan RPP atau target SMART yang diadopsi dari IEP siswa, (2) guru menggunakan cerita sosial untuk siswa autis untuk meningkatkan perilaku siswa berdasarkan RPP melalui berbagai

**WIDYASRAMA**, Majalah Ilmiah Universitas Dwijendra, ISSN No. 0852-7768

Desember 2020

metode, yaitu bercerita, metode drill (melatih secara berulang – ulang), pemberian proyek dan tugas, bermain, dan umpan balik dan (3) guru menilai perilaku siswa melalui penilaian berorientasi proses menggunakan observasi, catatan anekdot, dan portofolio. Dapat disimpulkan bahwa guru Australian Independent School Bali menerapkan social story untuk manajemen perilaku siswa autis.

**Kata kunci:** siswa autis, manajemen perilaku, cerita sosial, strategi

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Autism is a complex developmental disability that typically appears during the first three years of life. To be diagnosed with autism, a person must demonstrate either delayed or atypical behaviors in at least one of three categories, interaction, communication, or behavior (Willis, 2006). Autism is a spectrum disorder; it has many forms that affect people in variety ways and in varying degrees. According to Yapko (2003), children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), which is a neurobiological disorder, have features that are apparent in early childhood. Indicated that socialization and the ability to interact with others are very important in human life, requiring social skills.

Dealing with autistic students is not easy as what we think, students with autism can find pretending practically difficult. Some students with autism take pretend example literally. A child who interprets things literally might think to himself. So, taking things literally can make schoolwork difficult. According to Padmadewi and Artini (2017), equality and equity in education needs to be strengthened and supported to confirm the need of giving care and attention to all including the student with special needs. Having basic education is the right of every individual in Indonesia, and the treatment toward special need children which has been commonly carried out in Bali to segregate them from other students who are in a regular classroom, and treat them differently from the mainstream students.

Teaching autism students is challenging. The students with autism disorder display a wide variety of interest abilities and challenges. The autism spectrum is unique, complicated and difficult to handle. Autism students are not naturally grown up. The importance in teaching autism students is knowing initially their background by the Individualize Education Plan (IEP). Kurth and Mastergeorge (2009) stated most IEP goals addressed core symptoms of autism (e.g., communication skills) as opposed to academic skill development, along with fewer overall goals and more curricular adaptations as students entered adolescence. Furthermore, teachers must have some strategies and special theories. Teachers must have high level of patience and teaching with heart, the classroom atmosphere for autistic students need to be happy and involving lots of game or interesting activities. In giving an instruction to autistic student's teacher have to make an eye contact, to making sure that the students understand the meaning of the passage.

Social Stories are individualized short stories used to assist children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorders in understanding social situations by describing and explaining appropriate behavior and providing examples of appropriate responses,(M. A. E. Saad, 2016). Autistic students or special needs students often misunderstand or do not pick up on social cues like body language, face expression gestures and eye contact. Social

stories were developed for autism students to learn how they should behave in social setting by explicitly pointing out details about the setting and what typically happen in that setting. According to Gray, social story describes a situation, skill, or concept in terms of relevant social cues, perspectives, and common responses in a specifically defined style and format, (Ozdemir, 2010). The goal of a social story is to share accurate social information in a patient and reassuring manner that is easily to understand.

Australian Independent School is one of international school in Bali, that accepting autistic students or special need to joint in the mainstream class. There are many students come from many different cultures, different languages and different countries with different backgrounds. Australian Independent School is one of inclusive school in Bali, has special program for autistic students or special need students. Australian Independent School can be appropriate place to collect the information about the use of social story for autistic students to improved student's behavior in the class.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

The subject of this study was a teacher at Australian Independents School. This teacher called Learning Support Teacher; she has to teach on one-to-one teaching program. She has good experience in teaching of autistic students. She is teaching special need students for sixteen years at Australian Independents School. This teacher has given workshop every semester to develop knowledge of handling, creating a good strategy, method, and constructing the lesson plan for autistic students by an expert.

This study is qualitative research in form of case study. A case study has a qualitative characteristics, as an approach the key of case study research makes it possible to investigate the problem that happen around , situations, and social conditions, to give knowledge in the processes that explain how certain events or situations occur. The method of this research was qualitative research. This study employed some instruments, namely observations, interview, and documentation. The targeted data were the phenomena of behavior management for autistic students; how the teachers construct a student's behaviors implement the use of social story for an autism students to improve student's behavior based on lesson plan, how the teachers implement the lesson plan, and how the teachers assess an autistic students behavior. The instruments of data collection were the researcher as the main instrument, field note, interview guide, and camera/ video recorder. The data were analyzed descriptively using Miles and Huberman (1994) theory of data analysis. The data were analyzed in four stages, namely data collection, data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/ verification.

## **3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

The implementation of social story for autistic students for behavior management in Australian Independent School was classified in three process, namely planning, implementation, and assessment.

### **a. Planning**

The planning covers the preparation of lesson plan. Based on interview with the head of school at AIS Bali, before constructing the lesson plan, teacher has to know about special needs students or ASD. The principal informed that before the students attended in the classroom teacher and the principal conducted a meeting to parents

to find out about the student's needs, as a student's characteristic and students' behavior. The parents give the information about their child to the teacher and the principal. The principal said the leader of learning support teacher or the therapist observes the students to find out what types of autism, how to make the treatment and the class students attend. Then the result gives to the home room teacher and the learning support teacher as material to construct the lesson plan.

From the interview to the leader of learning supports teacher and the learning supports teacher at AIS, the writer found information or data that before constructing the lesson plan teachers need to know what is the students need to develop. Autistic students or ASD has different ability, needs and characteristic. To find out of the student's ability, needs and characteristic, teacher must get the information about those from student's Individualised Education Plan (IEP). Based on the interview to the leader of learning supports teacher or the therapist, IEP is very important in teaching and learning for autistic students or ASD in the mainstream class. IEP is stands for Individualised Education Plan. According to the leader of learning support teacher, the purpose of IEP making is to know the SMART target or goals, strategies, methods, accommodation necessary to help the autistic students cope and learn in a school year. SMART stands for Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound. IEP is regularly reviewed throughout the year to cater for the student's needs as they arise. IEP made for autistic students or ASD who joined mainstream classroom, without IEP teachers cannot constructed lesson plan. IEP is made by the leader of the learning supports teacher (professional therapist), teacher and the family).

Figure 1. Individualized Education Plan

Goals	Responsible Person	How achieved
<p>Goal: Practice personal and social skills to interact positively with others (AC:PP1001)</p> <p>Short-term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wilton will express his wants or needs by repeating 1-2 words or pointing to 1-2 picture symbols on 4 out of 5 attempts.</li> <li>• Wilton will express his wants or needs using 1-2 words or 1-2 picture symbols independently for 3 out of 5 attempts.</li> <li>• Wilton will take turns with a friend or adult by alternating his turn/line turn on 4 out of 5 attempts.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visuals and communication boards</li> <li>• Social stories</li> <li>• Verbal prompts/cues</li> <li>• Structured play</li> </ul>	LSA Teacher Parents	
<p>Goal: Wilton will be a confident and involved learner (EYLF Outcome 4)</p> <p>Short-term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given verbal and gestural cues, Wilton will attend to a non-preferred, small group activity and/or independent assignment, without protest, and remain on task with no-task avoidance for 3 minutes.</li> <li>• Wilton will follow one and two step directions to complete classroom activities with verbal and gestural prompting.</li> <li>• During a 10min academic task, Wilton will respond to staff instructions in an expected manner within 1 minute and with one reminder on 3 out of 5 trials.</li> <li>• Wilton will transition appropriately from tasks and activities in school environments given visual and verbal prompts 4 out of 5 attempts.</li> </ul> <p>Strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1:1 assistance and instruction from LSA or teacher</li> <li>• Visuals and visual timetable</li> <li>• Social stories</li> <li>• Gestural, verbal cues and prompting</li> <li>• Declarative Language</li> </ul>	LSA Teacher	
<p>Goal: Wilton will be an effective communicator (EYLF Outcome 5)</p> <p>Short-term objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given questions regarding his needs and/or wants, Wilton will answer yes/no questions correctly for 4 out of 5 attempts.</li> </ul>	LSA Teacher Speech Therapist	

Source: Australian Independent School

According to the interview from the leader of learning support teacher and the learning support teacher. The researcher found, before constructed lesson plan the teacher need to know and understand what methods or tool are effective for autistic students. Social story is one of the most effective ways or method to teach students with ASD. Most of them are very visual learners and they have significant issues in socializing. Social stories help student's





Figure 3. Teacher reads social story before the class started

Based on the interview and observation the researcher found that the Leader of learning support teacher and the teacher were implemented the lesson plan or daily planner but the teacher sometimes improvised the daily planner based on the student's behavior and the situation. The observation was done on Monday, week 3 term 1, semester 1. The researcher observed and recorded the teaching and learning process and the behavior based on the daily planner or lesson plan implementation done by learning support teacher in year 2. The instruments were used to help the researcher to collect data were camera, observation sheet and field note.

Because most of autistic students cannot communicate properly, teacher used feeling and activity visual chart to ask the students about their feeling, if students wanted to do and completed the work, teacher asked to point on the happy picture and the students can play the student's favorite game, but if students do not want to do it the students pointed on unhappy picture and students cannot play the games. The picture of the feeling and activity chart can be seen on Figure 4.



Figure 4. The picture of the feeling and activity chart

Based from the observation to the teacher at AIS Bali, it can be concluded that teachers implemented social story as a method to improve students' behavior. The teacher was demonstrated to read social story before the class

**WIDYASRAMA**, Majalah Ilmiah Universitas Dwijendra, ISSN No. 0852-7768 Desember 2020

started in every lesson period and giving feedback by asking the students to pointed the picture or words to make sure the students understand the instruction.

### **c. Assessment**

Affective assessment in distance learning has a great challenge (Susila, 2020). Assessment is the last process in this research, education is intended to provide diverse with the skill and competencies needed to enhance their lives. First, the assessments methods were portfolio, because the objective of an assessment is to demonstrate a student's gain across time, the best form of assessment for students with autism is a portfolio. Portfolio are collections of the student works over specific period, to be big scrapbook for representing all of the students work. Portfolio should highlight the student's best effort. Autism students has difficulties to developed at pace they are different from their peers the portfolio is a good method to assessing the autism student, portfolio will demonstrate and document that change, portfolio allowed the teacher to see and document skill as they emerge. By knowing when skills are emerging the teacher can plan instruction that will encourage the student to continue developing the skills. Second method was anecdotal records these are ongoing notes made by the teacher about student's behavior or performance of task. Anecdotal records effective in documenting the event leading up to, or following, a particular behavior. The third method was the observation by using ABC (Attendance, Behavior, Consequence) form checklist.

Teacher observed students in the process of activities, to check student's behavior to give an achievement as rewards for well behave and good progress. AIS learning support teacher has some ways to reward the students. Giving sticker, giving stamp, and certificate. Thus, AIS assess the behavior of autistic students through daily observation using observation sheet, weekly sheet. The student who had good behavior will be reinforced through sticker, stamp and certificate for the twice a month rewarding.

## **5. CLOSING**

### **Conclusion**

The implementation of social story for autism students to improve student's behavior in the class at Australian Independent School was implemented in three stages, namely planning, implementation, and assessment. In planning stage, the teacher conducts lesson plan or SMART target that adopted from the students IEP. In the implementation, the teachers practice to using social story for the autistic students to improve the student's behavior based on the lesson plan through various methods, namely storytelling, drilling, giving project and task, playing, and feedback. In the assessment stage, the teacher assesses the student's behavior through process-oriented assessment using observation, anecdote note, and portfolio.

### **Suggestion**

After conducting the study, there are some suggestions toward the implementation of social story to improve student's behavior in the class of autistic student at Australian Independent School Bali which directed to some individuals. For school, this study can be a reflection of the implementations of which social story to improve student's behavior in the class of autistic student have been conducted. This study hopefully becomes one of the data to evaluated and develop the program. The teachers, especially learning support teachers are the target in social story

to improving student's behavior in the class for autistic students. They can give proper example for the students during the program. It will be better if all the teachers could be great target social story to improving student's behavior in the class for autistic students. This study could be one of references to develop the research in other aspect of behavior in other institution.

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