TEACHERS’ TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM

(A Descriptive Study in Talenta Kids School for Autism in the Academic Year of 2013/2014)

Graduating Paper

Submitted to the Board of Examiners as a Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirement for the Degree of Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I) in English Departement of Educational Faculty of State Institute for Islamic Studies

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ENGLISH DEPARTMENT (TBI)
INTERNATIONAL CLASS PROGRAM
STATE INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES
(STAIN SALATIGA)
2014
Salatiga, September 15, 2014

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The Lecturer of Educational Faculty
Salatiga State Institute for Islamic Studies

ATTENTIVE COUNSELOR NOTES
Case: Lulu’atun Nasihah’s Graduating Paper

Dear,

The Head of Salatiga State
Institute for Islamic Studies

Assalamu’alaikum Wr.Wb.

After reading and correcting Lulu’atun Nasihah’s graduating paper entitled “TEACHERS’ TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM (A Descriptive Study in Talenta Kids School for Autism in The Academic Year of 2013/2014)”. I have decided and would like to propose that if it could be accepted by the educational faculty. I hope it could be examined as soon as possible.

Wassalamu’alaikum Wr.Wb.

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DECLARATION

_Bismi Allāhi Ar-Raḥmāni Ar-Raḥīmi_

Hereby the writer declares that this graduating paper is composed by the
write herself, and it does not contain materials written and has been published by
other people and other peoples’ idea except the information cited from the references.

The writer is capable to account to her graduation paper if in the future it can
be proved of containing others’ idea or in fact, the writer imitates the others’
grading paper.

Likewise, this declaration is made by the writer, and she hopes that this
declaration can be understood.

Salatiga, September 13, 2014
The Writer

_Lulu’atun Nasihah_
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GRADUATING PAPER

TEACHERS’ TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM
(A Descriptive Study in Talenta Kids School for Autism in The Academic Year of 2013/2014)

LULU’ATUN NASIHAH
NIM: KKI 113 10 126

Has been brought to the board of examiners of English English Department of Educational Faculty of STAIN Salatiga in September 29th, 2014, and hereby considered to completely fulfill the requirement of the degree of Sarjana Pendidikan Islam (S.Pd.I) in English Department of Educational Faculty of State Institute for Islamic Studies (STAIN) Salatiga

Board of Examiners,

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Secretary : Faizal Risdianto, S.S., M.Hum. 
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Salatiga, September 29th, 2014
Head of STAIN Salatiga

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MOTTO

“Then when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him).” The Quran 3:159

“Yesterday I was clever, so I wanted to change the world. Today I am wise, so I am changing myself.” – Rumi
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this graduating paper to:

1. My loving parents for their countless pray and endless support. You have been there for every decision I have made and help my dreams become reality. I hope I make you proud.

2. My sisters (Qurrota A’yun & Anisia Husna) and brothers (Yusuf Alfa Chizbi & Fikri Yusfillah) whom I am not okay without them. I am so thankful to have you all.

3. Pak Hammam, M.Pd and Ibu Setia Rini, M.Pd. who always remind us to chase our dream.

4. All of lecturers in International Class STAIN Salatiga.

5. My dearest friends in International Class batch 2010. Indeed, you are the best.
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the name of Allah, The Most Gracious and The Most Merciful, The Lord of Universe. Because of His blessing, the writer could finish this graduating paper. Secondly, may peace and salutation be upon our prophet Muhammad SAW who has guided mankind from the darkness into the lightness.

This research paper is made possible through the help and support from everyone, including: parents, teachers, family, and friends. Especially, please allow her to dedicate her acknowledgment of gratitude toward the following significant counselors and contributors:

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3. Setia Rini, M.Pd., as the second director of International Class Program
4. Noor Malikhah, Ph.D as the third director of International Class Program
5. Dr. H. Sa’adi, M.Ag., as the first counselor, for his most support and encouragement. He kindly read this paper and offered invaluable detailed advices on grammar and organization of the paper.
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12. All parties who could not be mentioned one by one and those who help the writer to complete this graduation paper.

The writer would appreciate critique and constructive suggestions to make this paper better. Finally, the writer hopes this graduation paper is beneficial to many people. Amen.

Salatiga, September 2014

The Writer

Lulu’atun Nasihah
ABSTRACT

The purposes of this research are to find out and analyze: (1) The profile of teaching and learning activity in Talenta Kids School for Autism, (2) Kinds of teaching strategies which are used by the teachers and the implementation, (3) The relevances of the teaching strategies conducted by the teachers toward students’ learning needs.

This study implied the descriptive qualitative research approach to answer the research questions. The study was conducted in Talenta Kids School for Autism Salatiga. The data were taken through observation and interviews. The interview participants are the teachers of students with autism.

The finding revealed that; teachers conducted different strategies of teaching for each student with autism considering the characteristics and impairments showed by the student. The strategies conducted by the teachers are mostly modified from ABA (Applied Behavior Analysis) approach. Teachers explained different methods to develop students’ communication skills, social interaction, and repetitive behavior management.

The study concluded that there are relevancies of teaching strategies applied by the teachers toward students’ learning needs. It is proved by the students’ reports which say that most of the students are able to meet the expectation of the learning goal by the end of the academic years. Some of the students are even transferred into regular school which means that they are already acceptable in normal life.

Keyword: Teaching strategies, Students with autism
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Study

The increase number of children diagnosed with Autism has garnered international attention, which led to President Obama’s endorsement of Autism awareness month and verbal proclamation of World Autism Awareness Day. Furthermore, IACC was developed in accordance with the Combating Autism Act of 2006, and was specifically established by congress in order to provide a blueprint for Autism research (U.S Department of Health and Human Services 2011).

According to the data released by UNESCO, the population of children with autism all over the world has increased significantly by the year of 2011 in round numbers 35 millions. While in Indonesia, as stated by Statistic Center Bureau (Badan Pusat Statistik), the numbers of children with Autism has reached 2.4 millions in 2010 and is getting increase around 500 in every year. It is estimated that an average of 1 in 88 children living in Indonesia suffer Autism.

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 (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000, p. 10). Meanwhile, Simon Baron-
Cohen (1985, p. 07) view that people with autism also suffer from theory of mind issue. Theory of mind refers to the notion that most of autistic individuals “do not understand that other people have their own plans, thoughts, and points of view. Furthermore, it appears that they have difficulty in understanding other people's beliefs, attitudes, and emotions” (Lantz, 2009, p. 01).

In addition, some experts convey that all of autistic individuals have a problem of context (Context Blindness). According to Vermeulen (2012, p. 21), Context Blindness can be defined as the lack of spontaneous use of context when giving meaning, especially to vague and ambiguous stimuli. He then enlists the characteristics of the context problems commonly showed by people with autism such as: missing point, less of contextual sensitivity, literal understanding, difficult in understanding non-verbal and figurative communication, and lack of problem solving ability. So far, these characteristics are mostly used and recommended as guidance to diagnose autism.

Although autism is a syndrome which means there is no way to cure it, autistic individuals can be taught and trained since earlier so they are able to accustomed to their own disability and to interact with people in social life without any serious obstacles. The most important thing is that they need to live independently. Therefore, it is necessary for them to go to schools or institutions providing appropriate teachers or instructors, therapists, facilities, and methods.
In spite of many children with autism share some common characteristics; each individual usually has specific interests, abilities, and personality (Carli, 2012, p. 18). Moreover, most children with autism also have some level of intellectual disability that ranges from mild to severe. Some of them have stronger abilities in the areas of rote memory and visual-spatial tasks than they have in other areas. Hence, the teachers should adjust to various teaching strategies in order to meet the learning needs of students with autism.

Lately, there are many theories about teaching autism proposed by several experts developed as approaches and teaching strategies which is applicable both for non-inclusive and inclusive setting. One of them is what so called Social Stories Method recommended by Carol Gray (1998). She has opinion that social stories work well for children with autism because they lack the ability to see situations from the perspective of others (Theory of Mind), may miss important social skills, tend to dislike surprises, and tend to respond well to repetition (Gray, 1998, p. 01). Different from Social Story which is designed for teaching social skills, K. Pierce and L. Schreibman (1997, p. x) propose the method of Using Peer Trainers to Promote Social Behaviour in Autism. Besides, Cognitive Picture Rehearsal from J. Groden and P. LeVasseur (1995, p.54) is also considered as an excellent method to teach self-control by presenting a sequence of behaviours in the form of pictures or pictographs with an accompanying script. However, no single method for teaching students with autism is successful for all students. Also, students’ needs change over time,
making it necessary for teachers to try other approaches or the same approaches with different strategies.

According to Indonesia Autism Foundation (Yayasan Autisme Indonesia, 2014), the lack of information and education about Autism in Indonesia has a big impact on the wrong treatments. Moreover, professionals and education institutions for Autism are still concentrating in mere big cities across Java. It is reported that so far there are only 40 psychiatrists who are expert on Autism. In addition, the high cost for the treatments sometimes out of reach for some lower socioeconomic background. Ironically, the education for students with Autism in many schools does not meet the qualifications yet because of the lack of schools’ preparations.

Based on the overview above, the researcher is interested in conducting a research entitled “TEACHERS’ TEACHING STRATEGIES FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM (A Descriptive study in Talenta Kids School for Autism in the Academic Year 2013/2014).

B. Limitation of the Problem

Knowing that teaching strategies for autism is a large topic which includes a lot of aspects, the researcher specifies the study in the strategies to overcome the common characteristics of autistic students divided into three aspects, i.e.: impairment in communication, impairment in social interaction, and unusual behavior, whereas these significantly influence the learning difficulties.
C. Research Problems

1. How does the profile of teaching and learning activities in Talenta Kids School for Autism look like?

2. What kinds of teaching strategies and how are they applied?

3. How do the teaching strategies conducted by the teachers benefit students’ learning needs?

D. Research Objectives

In accordance with the problems, the researchers have objectives of the research as follows:

1. This research is applicable to find out the profile of teaching and learning activity in Talenta Kids School for Autism.

2. This research is applicable to find out the strategies used by the teachers in Talenta kids School for Autism and how they are applied.

3. This research is applicable to find out the relevances of using certain strategies toward students’ learning needs.

E. The Significances of the Research

The significances of this research are:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research will prove the truth of some theories concerning teaching and learning for autism.
2. Practically, the result of this research may offer models of teaching that may be useful as input or evaluation for teachers, especially teachers in schools of autism and/or public schools with autism students.

F. Conceptualization

To avoid misunderstanding on some concepts in this study, the researcher provides the explanations as below:

1. Teachers’ Teaching Strategies

The meaning of strategy as defined in Oxford (1995, p.1179) is a plan designed for a particular purpose. While approaches deal with general philosophies of teaching and methods deal with more practical nuts and bolts, strategies deal with specific actions.

To make it clearer, the writer refers to Strasser’s (1994, p. 01) definition of Teacher’s Teaching Strategies i.e. generelize plan for a lessons which includes stucture, desired learner behaviour, in terms of the goals of the instruction, and an outline of tactics necessary to implement the strategy. There are different teaching strategies such as lecture, case method, discussion, cooperative learning, distance learning, and “The Role Playing Process “.
2. Students with Autism

According to IDEA (Individual with Disability Education Act) (2004), Autism means a developmental disability significantly affecting verbal and nonverbal communication and social interaction, generally evident before age three that adversely affects a student’s educational performance. Koegel (1995, p. 20) explains that students with Autism usually demonstrate difficulties in learning and often show unusual behavior, patterns of attention, and responses to sensory stimuli.

Based on the explanations above it can be briefly concluded that students with autism are they who have problem in communication and interaction with others as the impact of a serious mental condition that develops during childhood. The more detail information is written in the chapter II from this paper.

G. Review of Previous Researches

To enrich the information related to this study, the researcher takes reviews from the following research findings:

J. M Norman, B. C. Collins, and J. W. Schuster (2001) come with their research of Using an Instructional Package Including Video Technology to Teach Self-Help Skills to Elementary Students with Mental Disabilities which demonstrates effectiveness of using video models for teaching functional skills to learners who suffer autism. For example, video has been used to teach
preparation of food, shaving, and other daily living skills. According to them, video can isolate steps of a process and show perfect, repeated demonstrations of critical steps. Singularly, one of the more important behavioral principles for teaching students who have significant disabilities is the need to provide repetition of the targeted skills while manipulating important materials. (Norman, et al. 2001, p. 06)

Judi Randi, Tina Newman, and Elena L. Grigorenko (2001, p. 01) investigated about teaching student with autism to read meaning. The paper first summarizes the research on reading comprehension with a focus on the cognitive skills and processes that are involved in gaining meaning from text and then reviews studies of reading comprehension deficits in children on the spectrum. The paper concludes with a review of reading comprehension interventions for children on the spectrum. “These children can especially benefit from interventions addressing particular cognitive processes, such as locating antecedent events, generating and answering questions, locating referents, and rereading to repair understanding” (Randi et.al.2001, p. 08).

Reading comprehension is an important skill for all children to acquire. Understanding language, whether in written or oral discourse, is essential for communicative interactions. Although individuals with autism are typically delayed in language development, experience with written text may actually facilitate the acquisition of language skills. While Judi Randi and his colleagues focus their research on reading comprehension, in this paper, the
writer also describes the oral discourse between teacher and students and/or among students themselves.

Another research was conducted by Stephanie Toelken (2009) with the paper report entitled “Increasing Independence among Children Diagnosed with Autism Using: a Brief Embedded Teaching Strategy”. The purpose of her study was to evaluate the effects of a brief embedded teaching procedure, involving least-to-most prompting, for two paraprofessional staff in order to increase independent responses of two children diagnosed with autism in an inclusive setting. Training was given using a behavioral skills training approach, involving instructions, modeling, rehearsal, and feedback. A multiple baseline design across behaviors was used to evaluate the effects of the embedded teaching procedure. Maintenance of training effects was evaluated two weeks following the end of the study. After training of the brief embedded prompting procedure and during the following up probes, both students showed increased independence in each skill that staff were trained to teach. (Tolken, 2009, p. 02)

Another review is taken from Carli M. Cavanaugh’ (2012, p. 02-05) paper under the title “Teachers Perceptions of Interventions for Children with Autism in Aa School Setting” which focuses on interventions for children with autism in a school setting. The interventions being reviewed are social stories, visual cues, and family support. The definition and evaluation of social stories and visual cues in academic settings is also discussed in her paper. She also examined the population of parents of children with autism. The research
suggests appropriate use of social stories and visual cues in academic settings are effective and positive; however the transfer into nonacademic settings is limited, suggesting a need for more resources in nonacademic settings.

Lastly, the writer takes review from Rita Jordan’s (2003) journal that considers the nature of the presumed social play deficit in autistic spectrum disorders (ASDs). “The nature of play and its typical development is outlined and discussed in relation to play development in ASDs” (Jordan, 2003, p. 04). It is suggested that social play is a confluence of two strands of development that are affected in autism: social and emotional development, and the cognitive development of play. It is shown that social play develops in a transactional way and in autistic disorder initial social difficulties prevent the development of social interaction, with its role in eliciting and enriching spontaneous play.

At the same time, cognitive and affective difficulties prevent the play of children with autism developing to the extent of attracting other children and being of a complexity from which social play might develop. “This cycle of impoverished play opportunities for children with ASDs may be broken through direct teaching and there are encouraging models of teaching social play with some success” (Jordan, 2003, p. 05).

What makes this research different from the previous ones is that it is conducted in a school with exclusive or special education setting, while the previous researches were conducted in inclusive setting.
**H. Paper Outlines**

This research paper is organized into five chapters: introduction, theoretical frameworks, research methodology, finding and discussion, and closure.

The first chapter is introduction. It presents the research foundation including background of study, formulation of problems, the aims of research, literature review, and its organization paper. The keys of comprehending this research are provided in this chapter.

To keep both research’s validity and reliability, the researcher provides theories from several scholars which support this study in the second chapter named theoretical framework. It is important to define unusual terms that could be misinterpreted. This theoretical framework presents deep explanations of students with autism along with the various different characteristics. Also, some theories of teaching strategy that considered appropriate for students with autism are also presented here.

The third chapter is research report. It consists of research method, research design, data collection methods, and techniques of data analysis. The research setting and the data sources including respondents and its sample are also reported in this chapter.

The fourth chapter is data analysis. It includes data display and discussion.
The final chapter, the fifth, is closure. What can be taken from this research is shortly concluded in this chapter. In addition, the recommendations from the researcher are also listed in this chapter.

The last part is bibliography and appendixes.
CHAPTER II

THEORITICAL FRAMEWORKS

This chapter is divided into two sub sections that provides fundamental theories and deep explanation about autism and the teaching strategies for students with autism suggested by some experts. In this chapter, the researcher attempts to give an overview on what this research leading to.

A. Autism

1. Definition

Autism is a long-life developmental disorder which is characterized by impairments in communication and social interaction, and restricted, repetitive and stereotypic patterns of behavior, interests, and activities (Staples, 2010, p. 03). It is a complex neurological disorder that affects the functioning of the brain. Autism is a spectrum disorder, which means that the symptoms can be present in a variety of combinations, and can range from mild to severe. Multiple abilities can be affected, while others are not. For example:

a. Some individuals may have a severe intellectual disability, while others have normal levels of intelligence.

b. There may be a range of difficulties in expressive and receptive language and communication. It is estimated that up to 50% of individuals with autism do not develop functional speech. For those who do, speech may
have unusual qualities and be limited in terms of communicative functions. (Staples, 2010, p. 07)

c. There are problems with attention and resistance to change. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 05)

d. All individuals with autism have difficulties with social interaction, but the extent and type of difficulty may vary. Some may be very withdrawn, while others may be overly active and approach others in peculiar ways. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 05)

e. Individuals with autism may respond differently to sensory stimuli and may exhibit odd behaviors such as hand flapping, spinning, or rocking. They may also demonstrate unusual use of objects and attachments to objects. (Staples, 2010, p. 06)

These different characteristics of autism cause a significant implication to the instructor to determine what to teach and how to teach for each individual with autism.

The cause or combination of causes of autism is not certainly known. There is growing evidence that autism is a genetic condition, and that there are likely several different genes involved. The mode of genetic transmission appears complex, and scientists are focusing their work on finding which genes may be involved and how these genes are affected. So far, it appears that for at least a significant subgroup of persons with autism, there is a genetic susceptibility which differs across families. (Bristol, 1996, p. 26)
There is also evidence that there may be a higher prevalence among children with autism of problems very early in the mother’s pregnancy, at birth, or even after birth than for children who do not have autism. Early life events and environmental factors may interact significantly with genetic susceptibility in the child. (Rodier, 2000, p. 11)

Recently, various types of investigations, including “imaging studies electro-encephalographic studies, tissue studies on autopsy material, and neuro-chemical studies, have provided further evidence of a biological basis for autism” (Rodier, 2000, p. 11). The brains of individuals with autism appear to have some structural and functional differences from the brains of other people. Anomalies in the brain stem and cranial nerves have been found. Ongoing research is expected to pinpoint the exact genes and other conditions that combine to cause autism.

2. Characteristics Associated with Autism

Although every person with autism is unique, some characteristics are considered to be particularly important in the diagnosis of autism. These fall into four major categories:

a. Impairment in Communication

All people with autism experience language and communication difficulties, although there are considerable differences in language ability among individuals. Some are non-verbal while others may have extensive language with deficits in the area of pragmatics (the social use of
People with autism may seem caught up in a private world in which communication is unimportant. This is not an intentional action but rather an inability to communicate. Language difficulties that may be present include (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 11):

1) Impairments in nonverbal communication include differences in facial expression, use of gestures, imitation, eye contact, body postures and mutual or shared focus of attention.

2) There may be a delay in or lack of expressive language skills.

3) Those who do develop speech may demonstrate differences in pitch, intonation, rate, rhythm, or stress, e.g., some individuals with autism may demonstrate speech that is monotone or has a lilting quality and distinct repetitive rhythm.

4) Speech may also include repetitive and idiosyncratic language.

5) Echolalia is common. This is the immediate or delayed literal repetition of the speech of others. Echolalic speech may appear to be non-meaningful, but it does indicate the ability to produce speech and to imitate. It may also serve a purpose such as turn taking, making a statement, making an affirmative answer, making a request, rehearsal to help with processing what is heard, or to aid in the process of self-regulation.

6) Individuals who develop speech may have a restricted vocabulary that is dominated by nouns, and communication may be characterized by restricted communicative functions. The majority of speech is often to
make requests or rejections to regulate one’s physical environment, and is limited in social functions.

7) There may be a tendency to perseverate on a topic. That is, to continually discuss one topic and have difficulty changing topics.

8) Difficulty with pragmatics is evidenced by problems initiating conversation, using rules, maintaining a topic, interrupting, and rigidity. The individual with autism may demonstrate a stereotypic routine way of interacting.

9) Limited social communication should not be interpreted as a lack of interest or unwillingness. It is more likely due to deficits in the ability to extract social information from a social context.

10) Often, there are problems with comprehension of verbal information, following long verbal instructions, and remembering a sequence of instructions. In addition, the comprehension of language may be context-specific. The extent of difficulty will vary among individuals, but even those who are high functioning may have difficulty with comprehension of verbal information.

b. Implications for Instruction

Effective programs for students with autism and other pervasive developmental disorders include comprehensive communication assessment and intervention. This typically involves assessment by a speech and language pathologist as well as informal observation and classroom-based evaluation. The assessment serves as the basis for the
identification of goals, objectives, and strategies for facilitating development of receptive language and expressive skills, particularly with pragmatic skills. Instruction should emphasize paying attention, imitating, comprehending, and using language in play and social interaction. Communication goals should emphasize the functional use of language and communication in various settings. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 20)

b. Impairment in Social Interaction

Students with autism show qualitative differences in social interaction and often have difficulty establishing relationships. They have limited social interactions or a rigid way of interacting with others. The difficulties they have with social communication should not be seen as a lack of interest or unwillingness to interact with others; this lack of effective communication may result from an inability to distill social information from the social interaction and use appropriate communication skills to respond. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 18)

Understanding social situations typically requires language processing and non-verbal communication, which are often areas of deficit for people with autism. They may not notice important social cues, and may miss necessary information. People with autism typically have an impairment in the use of non-verbal behaviours and gestures to regulate social interaction, and they may have difficulty reading the non-verbal behaviour of others. People with autism have significant difficulty with
any interaction that requires knowledge of other people and what they think or know. It has been theorized that people with autism have a social cognitive deficit in this area. Baron-Cohen has described this as the “theory of mind”. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 11-12)

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. They may also have difficulty understanding their own and particularly other people’s beliefs, desires, intentions, knowledge, and perceptions. Students with autism often have problems understanding the connection between mental states and actions. For example, children with autism may not be able to understand that another child is sad even if that child is crying because they are not themselves sad. Teachers may better understand the thinking and behaviour of their students with autism if they realize that these students may not be able to grasp the fact that other people have their own perceptions and viewpoints. Students with autism demonstrate these difficulties in a variety of observable ways. They have a tendency to play with toys and objects in unusual and stereotypical ways. Some may engage in excessive or inappropriate laughing or giggling. Play that does occur often lacks the imaginative qualities of social play. Normal children usually play in their own imaginative world over toys while autistic children are often more interested in observing the toys or objects itself. Some children with autism may play near others, but do not share and take
turns, while others may withdraw entirely from social situations. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 23)

The quality and quantity of social interaction occurs on a continuum. Social interaction can be classified into three subtypes along this continuum (Garside et al., 2000, p. 22-23):

1) aloof—those who show no observable interest or concern in interacting with other people except for those needed to satisfy basic personal needs; they may become agitated when in close proximity to others and may reject unsolicited physical or social contact.

2) passive—those who do not initiate social approaches, but will accept initiations from others

3) active but odd—those who will approach for social interaction but do so in an unusual and often inappropriate fashion

It should be noted that people with autism do not necessarily fall into one distinct spot on the continuum.

d. Implications for instruction

Social skill development is essential for students with autism, and it is an important component in developing plans for managing challenging behaviours. Students with autism do not learn social skills incidentally by observation and participation. It is generally necessary to target specific skills for explicit instruction and to provide support for using the skills in social situations. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 24)
e. Unusual Behaviour

Children with autism often demonstrate unusual and distinctive behaviours, including:

1) restricted range of interests, and a preoccupation with one specific interest or object
2) inflexible adherence to a non-functional routine
3) stereotypic and repetitive motor mannerisms, such as hand flapping, finger flicking, rocking, spinning, walking on tiptoes, spinning objects
4) preoccupation with parts of objects
5) fascination with movement, such as the spinning of a fan, or turning wheels on toys insistence on sameness and resistance to change unusual responses to sensory stimuli. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 24, Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 14)

f. Implications for instruction

Many of the odd and stereotypical behaviours associated with autism may be caused by other factors, such as a hyper-sensitivity or hyposensitivity to sensory stimulation, difficulties in understanding social situations, difficulties with changes in routine, and anxiety. The instructional plan needs to incorporate strategies for expanding the students’ interests, developing skills, understanding the students’ responses to sensory stimuli, and preparing the students for planned changes. In planning instruction, teachers need to consider the problematic
behaviour and its function for that particular child for example, gaining attention or avoiding something. It may not be possible to eliminate all repetitive behaviours. Successful teaching strategies for supporting students with autism often focus on making environmental adaptations to decrease an inappropriate behaviour, and/or helping the student to learn another more appropriate behaviour that will serve the same function.

g. Learning Characteristics

People with autism have a psycho-educational profile that is different from normally developing individuals. Studies show that there may be deficits in many cognitive functions, yet not all are affected. In addition, there may be deficits in complex abilities, yet the simpler abilities in the same area may be intact. Current research identifies the following cognitive features associated with autism (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 16):

1) deficits in paying attention to relevant cues and information, and in attending to multiple cues,
2) receptive and expressive language impairments, particularly the use of language to express abstract concepts,
3) deficits in concept formation and abstract reasoning,
4) impairment in social cognition, including deficits in the capacity to share attention and emotion with others, and to understand the feelings of others,
5) inability to plan, organize, and solve problems.

Some students with autism have stronger abilities in the areas of rote memory and visual-spatial tasks than they have in other areas. They probably excel at visual-spatial tasks, such as putting puzzles together, and perform well at spatial, perceptual, and matching tasks. Some may be able to remember simple information, but have difficulty to remember more complex information.

Strength in visual-spatial skills has been described in personal accounts of Temple Grandin (1995, p. 20) who is suffering from autism. Temple Grandin is internationally known for her expertise in designing livestock facilities, as well as for her presentations and publications of her personal experiences with autism. She attributes her success in designing livestock facilities to her ability to visualize the required detail of such apparatus and buildings. She states that some people with autism can more easily learn and recall information that is presented in a visual format, and that they may have problems learning about things that cannot be thought about in pictures. She explains that she has a visual image for everything she hears and reads, and that she “thinks in pictures.”

Garside et al. (2000, p. 22) describes that Students with autism may have difficulty comprehending oral and written information, for example, following directions or understanding what they read. Yet some
higher-functioning individuals may be relatively capable of identifying words, applying phonetic skills, and knowing word meanings.

Some students may demonstrate strength in certain aspects of speech and language, such as sound production (phonology), vocabulary, and simple grammatical structures (syntax), yet have significant difficulty carrying on a conversation and using speech for social and interactive purposes (pragmatics.) A student who is high-functioning may perform numerical computations relatively easily, but be unable to solve mathematical problems. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 25)

Autistic students respond well to a structured environment and learn best by consistency and repetition of newly acquired skills. They most often learn these new skills more effectively in a quieter environment with few distractions. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 18)

h. Implications for instruction

These cognitive variations result in patterns of strengths and weaknesses in a students’ academic performance, social interaction, and behaviour. Development of cognitive skills is usually uneven. The education program planned for the student should therefore be based on the unique combination of strengths and needs of that individual. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 28)
The professional literature on autism has documented deficits in attention and language development, problems in concept formation, and difficulties with memory for complex information. These characteristics, considered in combination with personal accounts of how individuals with autism are more visually oriented, suggest that visual material should be incorporated when teaching individuals with autism. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 28)

B. Approaches for Teaching Autism

This sub-section provides some information of approaches which is considered appropriate for teaching autistic students. As school for autism is included in Special Education, provision for special children may be seen in broad sense as encouraging educational progress, as well as nurturing personal and social development (Farrel, 2003, p. 128). Is a child or young person is receiving psychotherapy; it can be helpful if the school is aware of the aims of the therapy and its potential contribution to the child’s ultimate well-being. Within such a framework, educators, therapists and other professionals can work towards similar goals (ibid.).

Before examining some distinctive approaches to psychotherapy autism, it is important to mention that combined approaches may be used. Accordingly, the following are the approaches suggested by some experts which are mostly the intervention from Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA). Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA) or sometimes called Observational
Learning Theory is an evidence-based, intensive education therapy for children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It is scientifically proven to be effective and is the preferred method of treatment for ASD. (www.autismspeaks.org accessed on 30 September 2014)

1. Psycholinguistic Approach

The psycholinguistic framework was originally developed in studies of children with specific phonological impairment and verbal dyspraxia. However, it may be used with a wide range of children with communication difficulties including autistic features (People and Wellington, 2001, pp. 299)

Psycholinguistics has been said to concern’…the process underlying the production, perception, and comprehension of language’ (Weismer, 2006, p. 93). The primary goal of psycholinguistics has been said to be ‘elucidating psychological mechanism of language use’ (Traxler and Gernsbacher, 2006, p.8).

2. Lovaas Program Approach

The Lovaas programme [ Lovaas, 1987 and the Lovass Institute for Early Intervention (www.lovaas.com)] is based on the principle of Applied Behavioral Analysis and uses behavioral methods to teach skills and to reduce unwanted behavior. (Farrel, 2009, p. 164)
The Lovaas Model was created as a comprehensive, integrated program in which skills complement and build upon each other. The intervention progresses systematically through stages of learning and emphasizes individualization of curriculum based on each child's strengths and weaknesses.

a. Very Young Children – An Interactive Play-based Approach

Children younger than three typically need additional time to adapt to the intensity of therapy. Treatment typically begins at 10-15 hours per week and can gradually increase to 35-40 hours per week by the age of three. Instructors use incidental teaching to take advantage of situations occurring in the natural environment to teach new behaviors. For example, when a child demonstrates interest in a toy, the instructor will prompt the child to request for the toy using an appropriate form of communication. In the beginning, instructors follow a child's lead as much as possible. (Farrel, 2009, p. 165)

Redirection is used as a non-intrusive method to interrupt self-stimulatory or repetitive behaviors. Instructors also build upon a child's initiations, both non-verbal and verbal, no matter how small or subtle. Once a positive learning environment is established for both the child and instructor, more structured time is gradually included. Structured time continues to emphasize effective reinforcers and motivating activities, but
also allows for more difficult skills to be taught in a more systematic manner. (www.lovaas.com accessed on 18 May 2014)

Goals for very young learners often include: expansion of communication, emergence of new play skills, development of interactive relationship, more appropriate reaction to sensory input, and development of other pivotal skills such as imitation and requesting. (www.lovaas.com accessed on 18 May 2014)

b. Young Children – A Comprehensive, Integrated Approach

Based upon the research conducted by Dr. Lovaas (1987), intensity of treatment is a critical factor in a child's progress. Therefore, most children between the ages of three and five receive one-to-one instruction for 5-8 hours per day, 5-7 days per week (approximately 35-40 hours per week). While the initial weeks of intervention may look similar to that of very young learners, structured time is typically increased more rapidly. We make the intensity of our program manageable for a child by dividing the day into sessions. (www.lovaas.com accessed on 18 May 2014)

A session usually lasts about 2-4 hours, during which a number of play breaks are included. Typically, a child and instructor work on a specific task for 2-5 minutes and then have a short break (1-2 minutes). Tasks may be practiced in a variety of settings including a structured table time, on the floor, around the house, and even outside. Longer breaks (10-20 minutes) occur every 1-2 hours. During that time, a child and instructor
might go outside, play a game, or have a snack. The breaks, both short and long, provide a child with time away from structured teaching, opportunities to initiate requests and play with the instructor, and allow for generalization of new skills to the child's everyday environment. The play breaks are calculated into the total numbers of hours per week (www.lovaas.com accessed on 18 May 2014).

The teaching schedule is adjusted to the needs of the individual child and it may, for example, include time for an afternoon nap. Skills are taught through a variety of behavioral interventions including: discrete trial teaching (e.g., an instructor says, "Mickey Mouse" the child touches a Mickey doll, the instructor reinforces the behavior), incidental teaching (as explained above for Very Young Children), increasing spontaneity, fluency-based instruction (increasing how quickly a child responds), and peer integration (encouraging relationship development through play dates with peers) (ibid.).

The primary goal of the intervention is for children to learn in the natural environment. Children progress through different phases of programming to accomplish this goal. Early programming emphasizes skills such as imitation, requesting, following simple instructions, and acquiring verbal imitation. Programming advances to teach early abstract concepts and responses to simple questions (initially one-word answers). Further programming emphasizes talking in complete sentences, learning skills more quickly, and beginning to seek out more elaborate interactions
with others. Programming develops to a level in which skills are eventually taught in a less formal format, more typical of everyday life. Questions typically require more than one response and more than one answer is possible. The child learns to balance leading play and cooperating with others. Finally, programming evolves to facilitate two of the most important factors in school: learning in a group and making friends. (Farrel, 2009, p. 166)

c. Older Children – A Practical, Collaborative Approach

Ongoing research has indicated behavioral treatment is an effective intervention for children even in later years. While the intervention retains many of the characteristics applied to young children, some modifications are appropriate for older, school-aged children. For example, collaboration with educators and other professionals at school and in the community continues to increase. Treatment may include time for community outings so that skills can be taught or generalized in the setting in which they are meant to be used. Structured time may be increased to thirty-minute periods, similar to the amount of work time required at school. Treatment gains are often generalized to school through the use of a trained 1:1 aide, and the treatment itself may even be carried out at the school itself. (www.lovaas.com accessed on 18 May 2014)

Goals for older children often revolve around improving their quality of life. Important skills include: self help, independent leisure time,
functional communication, inclusion at school, participation in family life, community skills, and peer interactions (ibid.).

3. Discrete Trial Training (DTT)

Discrete Trial Training (DTT) (Committee Educational Intervention for Children with Autism, 2001) provides a structured and therapist-led intervention. It involves breaking behavior into smaller steps, teaching one sub-skill at a time, shaping required behaviors until they are well learned and prompt fading. Reinforcement is directly related to the task. (Farrel, 2009, 164-165)

The approach comprises presentation, response, consequence, and pause. There is an adult presentation (a stimulus such as an environmental cue or an instruction cueing the child to perform the required behavior). The child’s response occurs as a result of the cue. A consequence (a reward) follows this response. There is a brief pause after the consequence and before the next instruction. If the presentation fails to have the desired effect, the adult may prompt the child or model the action required. DTT program may teach a different content, one example being its use in the Lovaas program beginning with early receptive language and leading to skill program in self-help, in school and in the community. (ibid., p. 164-165)
C. Teachers’ Teaching Strategies

It is mentioned above that children with autism appear with differences in learning style, impairments in communication, social skill development, and the presence of unusual behaviors. However, there is considerable individual variability in how these characteristics are manifested. There is no specific curriculum to teach students with autism. Effective programs are individualized and based on the unique needs and abilities of each student. The student’s personal program plan will include a combination of objectives from the regular curriculum as well as objectives that are unique to the individual. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 21)

No single method for teaching students with autism is successful for all students. Also, students’ needs change over time, making it necessary for teachers to try other approaches (Garside et al., 2000, p. 27). This sub-section contains information about important areas of instruction and instructional approaches that have proved successful for teachers working with students with autism, including suggestions from the literature on autism. To make it focus, the explanation is divided into five sections:

1. Strategies for classroom management
   a. Provide a structured, predictable classroom environment
      A structured, predictable environment is not to be confused with an authoritarian approach. The environment should be structured in order to provide consistency and clarity, so that students know where things
belong, what is expected of them in a specific situation, and can anticipate what comes next. Children with Autism tend to learn best in a quieter teaching environment with fewer distractions. Attempts to limit visual distractions as much as possible in a classroom, may help autistic students attend to the relevant teaching material and/or instruction. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 27)

b. Provide customized visual schedules

The schedule for a student with autism is individualized that fit comfortably into the overall classroom schedule. Teachers should vary the tasks to prevent boredom and alternate activities to reduce anxiety and some inappropriate behaviors. For example, alternate familiar, successful experiences with less preferred activities. Large group activities may be alternated with opportunities for calming down in a quiet environment. Incorporating physical activity and exercise throughout the day is helpful. Planned activities can be charted in a visual form and posted at or near the desks of students with autism so that they can understand changes in activities and know what to expect. The student can be helped to learn to use the schedules independently. Teachers can direct the student to the schedules when it is time to change activities, which should smooth the transition times. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 28)
c. **Provide relaxation opportunities and areas**

Providing a calm, quiet, and designated area where the student can go to relax can be helpful. Relaxing for some students with autism can possibly mean engaging in repetitive behaviors that have a calming effect on them. In some cases, students who crave certain repetitive movement, such as rocking or other self-stimulating movements, can be provided with a time and space where this movement is permitted. This could be included as an activity in the student’s schedule and built into the student’s daily routine. Other relaxation techniques to help students may include counting to 10, taking deep breaths, as well as tensing and relaxing muscles. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 30)

**d. Provide opportunities for meaningful contact with peers who have appropriate social behavior (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 21):**

1) Involve the student in shared learning arrangements.

2) Pair with buddies for walking down the hall, on the playground, and during other unstructured times.

3) Vary peer buddies across time and activities, to prevent dependence on one child.

4) Peers may also be involved in providing individualized instruction.

5) Cross-age peer supports/buddies can be arranged by assigning an older student to assist the student with autism.

6) Assist the student with autism to support his/her classmates or younger children in other classrooms.
7) If the school has an arrangement where a class of older students is paired with a younger class, ensure that the student with autism is also paired, and provide the necessary supports for success.

8) It will be necessary to teach appropriate social behavior and to provide the student with situation specific expectations for behavior.

e. Use age-appropriate materials

The materials used such toys and books are considered appropriate for each student based on the age and maturity. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 22)

f. Plan for transitions and prepare the student for change

This can be done with the aid of visual schedules to inform changes in routine. Social stories can also be used to prepare the student for new situations. (Pierce, 1997, p. 02)

2. Strategies for communication development

Expanding the communication skills of students with autism is one of the greatest challenges for teachers and families. Most people are unaware of the complexity of normal communication because children develop these skills automatically, usually by the age of three or four. Many students with autism have not developed the skills they need for spontaneous communication. It is a priority to help students with autism developing communication skills so they are able to express their wants
and needs, to interact socially, share information, express emotions, and protest or escape aversive situations. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 44)

Programs to facilitate the development of communication may begin in structured settings. However, promoting generalization and facility in using language requires that interventions take place in natural settings. Functional language skills are best taught in the social context where they will be used and where they have real meaning. The classroom and school environments provide a wealth of opportunities for developing functional communication within social contexts, and promoting generalization. However, opportunity alone will not address the communication needs of the student with autism. The specific skills requiring instruction and strategies for developing the targeted skills must be identified. (Garside et al., 2000, p. 45)

The following are some general strategies and suggestions to assist with communication (Manuel et al., 2005, p. 45-47):

a. Focus on developing interaction and communication in the environments in which the child actually communicates.
b. For the young child it may be necessary to provide some structured teaching to develop social and communicative play. This can be done through the provision of structured play opportunities which incorporate the child’s interests. Modeling, physical prompts, visual
cues and reinforcement are used to facilitate attention, imitation, communication and interaction.

c. Use vocabulary and sentence level appropriate to the student’s comprehension capability. Use language that is clear, simple and concise. For students with more severe communication disabilities, choose familiar, specific, and concrete words, and repeat as necessary.

d. Teach the student to listen. The use of visual supports may aid in obtaining and maintaining attention.

e. It may be necessary to talk more slowly or to pause between words to allow time for the student to process the information. The pace of speech is dependent on the ability of the individual child.

f. When working with students who are higher functioning, it is easy to assume that the student is understanding information, particularly if they are able to repeat it. However, even though there may be good recall, the understanding may not be there. It is important to avoid long strings of information, to use visual supports to aid comprehension, and to check for understanding.

g. Use social stories to explain events/activities.

h. Teach new vocabulary in a variety of contexts and using a visually-based approach.

i. Set up communication opportunities to encourage expression including:

1) Situations to encourage requests, such as for food, a toy or help
2) Situations to encourage negation such as refusing a food or toy, protesting when asked to do something, or indicating when the student wants to stop.

3) Situations to encourage commenting, such as labeling pictures in books, or objects from a box, greetings or play activities.

4) Virtually all individuals with autism have difficulty with pragmatics (the interpretation and use of language in social situations). Even those individuals who have a good vocabulary and appear to have a command of the language may have a restricted understanding of social and conversational interactions. The social use of language is an important area for instruction for students with autism.

5) Students also need opportunities for social interactions and community-based experiences in order to practice the skills.

6) Students with autism need structured lessons on how to listen. Reinforcing listening efforts may be necessary rather than assuming that listening is an expected and automatic behavior. Breaking listening down into components for the student and reinforcing each component may be helpful. For example, teach the student to face the speaker, look at one spot (which does not mean they must make eye contact), and place hands in a planned position. Praise, or otherwise reward, each step.
3. Strategies for teaching social skills

Students with autism should be encouraged to be part of the social world around them. They have a need to interact socially and be involved with others. However, one of the defining characteristics of autism is impairment in social interactions and social skills. Students with autism have not automatically learned the rules of interaction with others and they are unable to follow these unwritten rules of social behavior (Garside et al., 2000, p. 50). Social skill development is an essential curricular area for students with autism, and is also a crucial component of any intervention plan for changing problem behaviors.

a. Use social story

One of the most helpful methods for teaching social skills is the use of social stories, a strategy developed by Carol Gray (1998, p.02). A social story is a description of a social situation that includes the social cues and appropriate responses, and is written for a specific situation for the individual student. The story can be used for a variety of purposes, including facilitating the inclusion of students in regular education classes, to introduce changes and new routines, to explain reasons for the behavior of others, to teach situation-specific social skills, and to assist in teaching new academic skills.

These three basic approaches are suggested for implementing a social story (Gray, 1998, p.05):
1) For a student who reads independently, the story is read twice by an adult, followed by the student reading it back. Then the student reads it daily.

2) If the student does not read, the story may be recorded on a cassette tape with a signal (i.e., bell) to turn the pages. The student is taught to read the story, and reads it daily.

3) Videotape the social story to incorporate video modeling. The story is read aloud on a videotape, with one page on the screen at a time.

The process begins with identifying the student’s needs through observation and assessment. Once a difficult situation is identified, the person chosen to write the story observes the situation and tries to understand the perspective of the student in terms of what is seen, heard, and felt. The story is then written at an appropriate comprehension level, from the perspective of the student, and includes descriptive, directive, perspective and affirmative statements as follows:

1) descriptive sentences provide information on the setting, activity, and people involved

2) directive sentences are positive statements about the desired response for a given situation

3) perspective sentences provide a description of the possible reactions of others

4) affirmative sentences stress important points. (Saskatchewan Education, 1999, p. 35)
4. Strategies for managing challenging behaviors

Children with autism may present with some unusual and challenging behaviors, and do not always respond to the usual methods of discipline. It is frequently necessary to develop a systematic plan for changing behaviors. A behavior intervention plan must be based on an understanding of the characteristics of autism, as well as knowledge of the strengths and needs of the individual student.

A behavior plan can be developed through a collaborative problem-solving process involving the significant people in the student’s life, including the parent(s)/guardian, classroom teacher, special educator, and teacher assistant. It may also include other involved persons such as the principal, consultant, speech language pathologist, and psychologist. The following section outlines the major components of the process to develop a behavior plan adapted from Saskatchewan Education (1999, p. 50):

a. Identification of the problem behavior

1) Identify and describe the behavior in observable terms, including where and when it occurs, what usually happens before the behavior, and the typical reactions of other people.

2) The student may display more than one challenging behaviors. It may not be reasonable to expect to change all behaviors, and priorities for intervention will need to be established.
b. Identification of function of behavior and contributing factors

1) The function or purpose of a behavior is not always obvious. It is frequently necessary to collect information about the student, behavior, environment, and consequences to determine what purpose the behavior serves and what factors are maintaining the behavior.

2) A comprehensive behavior plan should include a thorough assessment of the behavior and the context in which it occurs, to determine the underlying contributing factors.

3) Assessment should also include gathering significant information about the student, such as likes and dislikes, fears and frustrations, communication skills, strengths and needs, how the student interacts socially, and the typical responses to sensory stimuli.

4) Problem behaviors may be a result of other characteristics associated with autism, such as attending difficulties, problems with interpreting verbal information, limited verbal expression, impairment in social skills, and different responses to sensory stimulation. For example, what appears to be a lack of cooperation may be the result of not understanding expectations or not knowing what is going to happen. (Manuel et al., 2005, p. 48)

c. Identification of an alternate behavior

Functional analysis of behavior serves as the foundation for developing the behavior plan. Once the possible purpose of a behavior
is determined or hypothesized, it is possible to identify an alternate, more appropriate behavior that can serve the same function.

The focus of the behavior intervention is on instruction rather than discipline. The goal is to increase the student’s alternate appropriate means of achieving the same purpose. The success of the plan is more dependent on the instructional and proactive components and less influenced by the reactive strategies. (Saskatchewan, 1999, p. 50)

d. Developing the behavior plan

Once the team has identified the problem behaviors and contributing factors, the alternate behaviors, and the strategies for instruction and management, the specific interventions and approaches should be specified in the student’s personal program plan.

Written plans clearly outline the environmental adaptations, positive program strategies and reactive strategies, so that all people involved with the student can maintain a consistent approach. This is particularly important in maintaining consistency between home and school and environments throughout the school. (Manuel et al., 2005, p. 55)

In addition, time lines need to be established, and a process should be in place to evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.
CHAPTER III

RESEARCH REPORT

A. Research Method

1. Research Approach

The researcher applies Qualitative approach in doing this research. Qualitative research does not introduce treatments or manipulate variables, or impose the researcher's operational definitions of variables on the participants. Rather, it lets the meaning emerge from the participants. It is more flexible in that it can adjust to the setting. Concepts, data collection tools, and data collection methods can be adjusted as the research progresses (Darlington and Scott, 2002, p. 10).

2. Type of Research

The type of this research is Descriptive research. Descriptive research can be either quantitative or qualitative. It can involve collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, such as scores on a test or the number of times a person chooses to use a certain feature of a multimedia program, or it can describe categories of information such as gender or patterns of interaction when using technology in a group situation. Descriptive research involves
gathering data that describe events and then organizes, tabulates, depicts, and describes the data collection (Glass & Hopkins; 1984).

Here is the explanation of Descriptive research quoted from Salle (2010:01):

“Descriptive research seeks to describe the current status of an identified variable. These research projects are designed to provide systematic information about a phenomenon. The researcher does not usually begin with a hypothesis, but is likely to develop one after collecting data. The analysis and synthesis of the data provide the test of the hypothesis. Systematic collection of information requires careful selection of the units studied and careful measurement of each variable”.

Descriptive research describes ‘what is’. It involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of condition that exist. It involves some types of comparison or contrast and attempts to discover relationships between existing non-manipulated variables. (Best, John. W; 1983:25)

3. Research Site

The study was conducted in Talenta Kids, School for Autism of Salatiga in the academic year of 2014. The reason of selecting Talenta Kids School for the research setting is because it has more than one curriculum. This school combines different curriculums for each student based on the students’ conditions themselves. It is suitable for this
research whereas the researcher questioning about kinds of teaching strategies for students with autism.

In this study the targeted respondents are class teachers, or head of school whereby they provide information on students with autism and how teachers teach students with Autism.

4. Method of Data Collection

Once a research question or hypothesis have been formulated, researchers will need to make decisions about what kind of data they can collect that will best address their research topic (Driscoll, 2011, p. 2). In this research, the researcher chooses to examine teaching strategies by observing both the teachers and students’ activities during the learning process. Other than observation, the researcher also collects the data from documentation such as students’ test scores and achievement reports in order to answer the research question number three i.e. the implication of certain teaching for students’ achievements. The researcher also conducts interviews with a close-form question with the teachers to confirm the validity and reliability of the observation result.

To give more understanding about the data collection method used in this research, the researcher provides some informations below:
Observations mean observing and measuring the world around you, including observations of people and other measurable events (Driscoll, 2011). As a data-gathering device, direct observation may make an important contribution to descriptive research. Certain type of information can best be obtained through direct examination by the researcher. (Best, 1983, p. 158)

The researcher observes the teaching and learning process in the classroom. The researcher especially focuses on the teaching strategies used by the teachers and the responses showed by the the students toward the teachers’ instructions. The researcher makes sure that the observation is well-planned and thoroughly recorded. Hence, the researcher prepares the observation sheet as the research instrument. The following is the list of observation objects adapted from Florida’s Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality Classroom Indicator:</th>
<th>ENVIRONMENTAL ARRANGEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Room arrangement has clearly defined visual boundaries for specific activities, allows for supervision of all students at all times; and prevents or minimizes problem behaviors.</td>
<td>Visual supports are at the correct level of symbolic functioning, and are used to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SCHEDULING, ACTIVITIES, AND INTENSITY</td>
<td>enhance predictability, facilitate transitions, and help convey expectations.</td>
</tr>
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<td>--------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A staff schedule showing staff and student assignments, locations, and activities, is prominently posted and being followed.</td>
<td>A daily classroom schedule is posted at student level, is visible and appropriate for students’ level of symbolic functioning, and is used throughout the day. Schedule and activities reflect appropriate distribution of curriculum for the age, level and individual needs of students in the classroom. Schedules reflect a variety of learning formats for each student, including 1:1 instruction, small group, large group, independent work, and social interaction/leisure options. Individual schedules are at child level and are being used correctly. Large group transitions are infrequent and supported by environmental arrangement and scheduling. Staff ratio of at least 1 adult for every 3 students is maintained during observation. Activities are language-based, and staff encourages commenting, asking and answering questions; staff creates opportunities to promote communication between students. Students remain actively engaged in learning opportunities throughout observation, with no more than 2 minutes down time. During 5 minute observation, staff interacts with each student at least once to teach or promote learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUCTION AND INTERACTION</td>
<td>Comments directed toward students follow a ratio of 7:1 instructive/positive comments to corrective comments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>During instruction, staff delivers instructional cues clearly, prompt as needed, and reinforce correct responses or deliver error correction as needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inter-staff communication is respectful of students and limited in content to classroom issues and instruction. Confidentiality of students is preserved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All classroom staffs are involved in delivering instruction, including during out of classroom activities (lunch, recess, CBI).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All classroom staff can state IEP objectives being worked on for each student when asked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instructional methods reflect the unique needs of students, and are grounded in research-based practices, including DTT, incidental teaching, and direct instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction pace promotes high rates of correct responding, and uses appropriate schedules of reinforcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Instruction is individualized, incorporates natural and individualized reinforces, and encourages spontaneous use of skills in different settings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Hands-on” contact with students promotes independence and preserves dignity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Skills are taught in the context of naturally occurring activities and daily routines.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students with slow rates of learning are provided intensive levels of instruction, including daily one-on-one instruction sessions. Data are collected during instructional activities for each student; data are tracked, summarized and reported and brought to student study/IEP meetings. Daily communication with parents is informative, positive and nonjudgmental.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffs create many opportunities for spontaneous use of communication skills, and foster communication through a variety of instructional approaches.</td>
<td>Use of AAC devices or PECS or sign for students using these supports is encouraged in all situations, and students are not denied access to their communication systems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CORE CURRICULUM AREAS</strong></td>
<td>Behavior problems are minimized by using choices, clear expectations and positive reinforcement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior problems are minimized by using choices, clear expectations and positive reinforcement.</td>
<td>Students displaying behavioral difficulties have an individualized behavior plan or have been referred for an FBA.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunities for meaningful interaction and friendships with non-disabled peers are provided. Social skills instruction is planned and supported by staff.</td>
<td>Curriculum and schedule reflect an emphasis on the core deficits of autism; activities emphasize social interaction skills with adults and peers, functional communication for all students, age appropriate engagement, and maximizing independent functioning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. Documentation

Documentation is a method of collecting data by gathering available documents or notes. Documents are an important source of data in many areas of investigation. The following may be used as sources of data: records, reports, printed forms, letters, autobiographies, diaries, compositions, themes or other academic work, books, syllabi, court decisions, and film.
The data of this research are collected from the teachers’ documents; among others are: syllabi and students’ and teachers’ profile.

c. Interview

Interview is asking participants questions in a one-on-one. It is a way that you can gather information about people’s beliefs or behaviors. With this method, the information you collect is not first-hand (like an observation) but rather “self-reported” data, or data collected in an indirect manner (Driscoll, 2011). Interviews are best used when you want to learn detailed information from a few specific people. Interviews are also particularly useful if you want to interview experts about their opinions.

In this research, interviews are also used to confirm the validity and reliability of the observation result and documentation. The language applicable in interview was Bahasa Indonesia to make the respondent understand well the research question to provide the truth and giving information more comfortable and freedom of speaking without language barrier and the interview was conducted within school environment. Data collected and the information gathered is stored or recorded by note taking and the audio recorder recording.
The interview guide for this study is formulated in form of Open ended question where by this type of question permits the informant to make free response and explaining as they wish. This is helpful for gathering more information and useful for using with few informants. The interview questions will be directed into finding the information in the following issues:

1) Curriculum for students with autism
2) Classroom managements for students with autism
3) Teaching strategies for students with autism for specific domains (communication impairments, social skills deficit, and behavioral impairment)
4) The relevance of certain teaching strategies toward students’ learning needs.

5. Technique of Data Analysis

Based on the data analysis model for qualitative research, the researcher analyzes the data through these phases suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994):

a. Data reduction

Data reduction refers to the process whereby the mass of qualitative data you may obtain; interview transcripts, field notes, observations etc. is reduced and organised, for example coding,
writing summaries, discarding irrelevant data and so on. At this stage, try and discard all irrelevant information, but do ensure that you have access to it later if required, as unexpected findings may need you to re-examine some data previously considered unnecessary.

Data reduction takes place through the process of coding. Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or inferential information compiled during a study. Codes are usually attached to chunks of varying size; words, phrases, sentences or whole paragraphs. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 56)

b. Data Display

Data Display provides an organized, compressed assembly of information that permits conclusion drawing. To draw conclusions from the mass of data, Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 58) suggest that a good display of data, in the form of tables, charts, networks and other graphical formats is essential. This is a continual process, rather than just one to be carried out at the end of the data collection.

c. Discussion

This activity is the third element of qualitative analysis. It involves conclusion drawing which is stepping back to consider what the analyzed data mean and to assess their implications for the questions at hand. Then verification, integrally linked to conclusion drawing, entails revisiting the data as many times as necessary to
cross-check or verifies the emergent conclusions. (Miles & Huberman, 1994, p. 60)

6. Validity of the Finding

According to Lewis and Richie quoted from Mwakalinga (2012, p. 32), Validity is the correctness or precision of a research finding. In this study, some validation strategies were used to get the information regarding the validity:

a. The findings in this study were discussed with other people who have experience in research including supervisor and peers.

b. Reflection was done during the interview process to ensure that the researcher understand the real meaning presented by the interviewee. The interview was in Bahasa Indonesia and translated in English to make sure the informants understand clearly and to give the freedom of speaking free without language barrier.

B. Research Setting

1. Research Location

   The research takes place in Talenta Kids School for Autism, Salatiga.

2. Research Schedule

   The sequences of data collection and the data analysis are as follows:
Table 3.2
Research Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Preparing the research</td>
<td>March 20th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>proposals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>July 18th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Data Collection</td>
<td>July 23rd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>July 26th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Concluding the research</td>
<td>August 30th</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Profile of Talenta Kids Salatiga

a. The Brief History and Development of Talenta Kids Salatiga

Talenta Kids Salatiga is a private school under management of Kanz Kids Family Foundation located in Perum Griya Mustika No. 2 RT 07 RW 04, Tegalrejo, Argomulyo, Salatiga. Talenta Kids was established on May, 1st 2008. Back then this school had no name yet and the foundation had not been established yet. The current name, Talenta Kids, is officially used by the end of 2008. While the foundation of Kanz kids family was established in 2009. At first, the school occupied the house of school’s headmaster, Dra. Hj. Lilik Sriyanti, MSi. before the permanent school building was established later in 2010.
Talenta Kids is the only school specialized in addressing students with autism in Salatiga. The material subjects taught in this institution refer to the curriculum for students with special need published by National Education (Pendidikan Nasional) adjusted with the students’ characteristics and the recent approach for autism treatment. The materials that are taught among others are: self-assist skill, academic performance, motorist skill, and social and communication ability.

b. Location

Salatiga lies at the altitudes of 450-825 metres height above the sea level that makes the city has tropical weather, cool and fresh air. That is the first impression of typical characteristic of Salatiga. Astronomically, the city is located between 1100.27′.56,81″ – 1100.32′.4,64″ east longitude and 0070.17′. – 0070.17′.23″ south altitude. Morphologically, the city settles at the valley surrounded by Merbabu Mountain and other smaller mountains such as Gajah Mungkur, Telomoyo, dan Payung Rong. Geographically, it is in the area of Semarang Regency. (www.Kemendagri.co.id accessed on 30 May 2014)

As Salatiga is in the area of Semarang regency, the border line is shared. In the northern, the city shares the border line with Pabelan subdistrict. Meanwhile, the east border line shares with
Tengaran subdistrict. The south one is shared with Tengaran and Getasan subdistrict. At last, in the western, Salatiga shares the border line with Tuntang subdistrict. (www.Kemendagri.co.id accessed on 30 May 2014)

65% of Salatiga areas are wavy including the area of Dukuh, Ledok, Kutowinangun, Salatiga, Sidorejo Lor, Bugel, Kumpulrejo and Kauman Kidul. 25% of it is slope and the rest (10%) is flat. The various geographical condition makes this city well known as a beautiful region (ibid.).

Salatiga is administratively divided into 4 subdistricts and 22 villages. The subdistricts include Sidorejo subdistrict, subdistrict Tingkir, subdistrict Sidomukti, as well as subdistrict Argomulyo. While the villages include Noborejo, Cebongan, Randuacir, Ledok, Tegalrejo, Kumpulrejo, Middle Tingkir, Tingkir Lor, Kalibening, Sidorejo Kidul, Kutowinangun, Carrier, Kecandran, Hamlet, Mangunsari, Kalicacing, Pulutan Blotongan, Sidorejo Lor, Salatiga, Bugel, and Kauman Kidul (ibid.).

c. Vision

Implementing education for students with special need strives to independence.
d. Mission

1) Providing services of appropriate education for students with special need.

2) Conducting behavioral therapy and training self-management ability for students with special need to be able to adapt to the social life.

e. Purpose

Providing education institution for students with social need in Salatiga and surrounding.

f. The School Organization

The following is the structure of school organization:

Founders : Drs. H. Alfred L., M.Si

Education Consultants : Prof. Dr. Mansur, MA

Savitri Dewi, S.Psi. Psi.MCH

Headmaster : Dra. Hj. Lilik Sriyanti, M.Si

Administrator : Alfisyah Liasari, S. Komp.

Treasurer : S. Pujiastuti C.

Supervisor : Prof. Dr. Mansur, MA
HRD Sector: Zulfa Machasin, M.Ag

Teachers:
1. Wiras Murwandari, S.Komp
2. S. Pujiaastuti C,SE
3. Umi Masrifah Thoiyibah
4. Vina Fatmawati
5. Popy Indriani
6. Ani Yuli Astuti

g. Profile of Students

There are 10 students who are currently studying at Talenta Kids Salatiga whereas all of them are diagnosed with autism. Most of the students are from Salatiga and surroundings.

**Table 3.3**

**The Data of Students of Talenta Kids Salatiga**

**In the Academic Year of 2013/2014**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M. Aqshal Kamil</td>
<td>Jakarta, July 29th 2002</td>
<td>Gejayan, Ngempon, Ampel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Kenzo Amadeo D’Lionel Lioe</td>
<td>Salatiga, October 27th 2010</td>
<td>Sukowati 21 Salatiga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Jihannika Husniyyah Yumna</td>
<td>Boyolali, October 3rd</td>
<td>Karang Gede Boyolali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Allegra Malmstino</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, December 22&lt;sup&gt;nd&lt;/sup&gt; 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Yohanes Raka Vainardi</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, June 20&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 1999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Danovan Reza Lazuardi</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, February 28&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abdullah Nur Muhamma</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Semarang, April 17&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Muhammad Faqih R.F</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Semarang, December 10 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Funny Naftali</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, Oktober 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Putra Adi P</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, March 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Satria Adi Chadra</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, January 8&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Ogy Raja Mahardika</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>Salatiga, October 7&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Name</td>
<td>City, Date</td>
<td>Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Indah Wahyu</td>
<td>Semarang, July 14&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2005</td>
<td>Kebonpete, Kec. Getasan Kab. Semarang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Gavriila Abhinaya</td>
<td>Banyumas, October 21&lt;sup&gt;st&lt;/sup&gt; 2008</td>
<td>Klapagading Kulon 01/08 Wangon Banyumas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Citra Wahyu</td>
<td>Semarang, January 4&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2005</td>
<td>Rt 28 Rw 05 Tengaran Kab Semarang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>M. Zidan Anjani</td>
<td>Semarang, May 24&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2003</td>
<td>Wedilelo rt 34 rw 8 Karangduren</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Achiyat Halimi</td>
<td>Salatiga, June 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2008</td>
<td>Jl. Somopuro Lor No. 2 05/08 Salatiga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Aldenatha Aura Taqi</td>
<td>Salatiga, September 9&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2005</td>
<td>Jl.Sinoman temple no 43 salatiga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Kalica Sahlatusyifa</td>
<td>Salatiga, November 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2008</td>
<td>Jln. Patimura Km Balai Penelitian Getas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>M. Fachri Dzaki Islami</td>
<td>Salatiga, February 5&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt; 2008</td>
<td>Jl Diponegoro No 132B Salatiga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data of Students of Talenta Kids Salatiga
CHAPTER IV

DATA ANALYSIS

In this chapter, the researcher displays the research findings collected through the observation, interview, and documentation. The researcher firstly selects the appropriate data that are necessary to find out the answer for the research questions. Since this research is a qualitative one, the researcher mostly does interpret the data from interview and combine it with the observation and documentation results then describe it in a narrative form.

To give the readers a better understanding, the researcher breaks down the explanation into two sub-sections as follows:

A. Data Display

1. The General Profile of Teaching and Learning Process in Talenta Kids

In order to understand the concept of teaching students with autism, the researcher firstly asked the teachers about the general profile of students and teachers.

Every student with autism has different impairment characteristics and learning needs that prevent them to study in classical system. Teachers should know what impairments that students suffer and how to teach them in order to meet the learning goals. Each student may have different
curriculum because each student has his/her own learning goals. Mrs. Vina, one of the teachers in Talenta Kids says that

“...because every student has their own weakness, we apply one-to-one aide. Each student has different curriculum and time-table. At the beginning, students are diagnosed in order to prepare the appropriate curriculum and teaching method so they know how to deal with their impairments. The curriculum is combined from regular education and students' needs”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

Dealing with the students’ diagnoses, another teacher, Mrs. Umi says that they mostly use the report from medical doctor and parents. Besides, they also use screening checklist to know the characteristics of the students.

“When the students enroll this school, usually we do interview their parents about their children’s behaviors and we ask them to fill the screening checklist adapted from National Autistic Center. Sometimes parents also bring the recommendation letter from medical doctor”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.30)

In another interview, Mrs. Umi also says that they observe new students for several days or even weeks to recognize students’ behavior including the inappropriate behaviors which need to be omitted or the appropriate ones that should be reinforced.

“For new students like Gavi (she mentioned the name of new student), we observe them for several days or even weeks to know whether they demonstrate bad behaviors like hitting and screaming or not, if so, we will use behavioral treatments to omit those behaviors. In contrary, we will reinforce the good behaviors that they show by giving them rewards”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.30)
2. Teaching Strategies for Students with Autism

a. Classroom Management

To know the classroom management setting, the researcher conducted observation in all classes referring to quality classroom indicator adapted from Florida’s Centers for Autism and Related Disabilities (CARD).

From the result of the observation, the researcher notes that the classroom is completed with the material and furniture which are age appropriate. There are also visual support such as puzzle and picture to help students understand the subject. One of the classrooms provides a large mirror whereas the student always sits in front of it during behavioral therapy.

Furthermore, the researcher interviewed Mrs. Vina about the classroom setting and its benefit.

“The classroom is designed as relax as possible to avoid stress because some students are too sensitive with sounds or fuss. We also provide some toys which are age appropriate. The classroom is not large...it gives benefit though; teachers can easily monitor the students because they cannot move around much”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

She also says that aside from the individual classroom, one larger room is provided as a playground. The teachers usually take the students there to get along with their peers during break time. This is intended to train them social interaction.
“…some students are very withdrawal that we need to encourage them to interact with their peers. Usually, during the break time we assist them to play together in the playground”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

The researcher noted that every teacher has their own way to start the class. One of the teachers guided the student to pray by stating loudly the incantation. The other one asking them some simple question such as asking their name, what they eat for breakfast and so on. The students are also trained to greet all of the teachers before starting the class.

At the end of the class, students have a goodbye session whereas each of them are obligated to visit around the other class and say goodbye or shake hand with other teachers and peers. In order to make the students get accustomed, this activity is done every day.

b. Strategies for Communication Development

Teachers mentioned that they adjust different methods to develop students’ communication skill based on the students’ condition. Mrs. Raras discuss this by saying

“For the communication issue, it is based on the children’s condition. What is their weakness? There are some children who are able to speak but failed in communication. There are various kinds of communication treatments by considering the problems”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 10.00)

In addition, Mrs. Umi explains

“For students who have speaking delay, we attempt to ask them to imitate vocal sounds first then continue to imitating
single word and later the longer sentence. Besides, there is also therapy for motor oral once a week”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.30)

During the class session, Mrs.Vina was asking a student to mention his name. At first, the student was not responding and he was also ignoring the teacher’s existence. Yet, Mrs. Vina was not giving up and was retrieving to repeat the question over and over until the student finally saying his name with stammering (Observation on 18 July 2014). Later, she explained in the interview;

“The important thing in developing students’ communication skill is that we have to repeat the utterance target until the students can imitate it appropriately. We will never teach them new utterances before they master the previous one”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

When selecting target skills to teach, it is important to consider the child’s current language repertoire. Incidental teaching helps children take the next steps, but must not request skills that are presently out of their reach. Furthermore, teaching is more effective and children progress more rapidly if teachers select only one or a few language targets at a time, instead of trying to teach multiple responses. For example, a teacher might initially target the pronouns “I” and “you” and reserve instruction on the use of other pronouns until the child masters these. The procedure of incidental teaching is effective for shaping new language skills even before children learn to imitate verbal models or follow adults’ directions.
A child, for example, who initiates interaction by pulling an adult towards a preferred item, presents opportunity for incidental teaching. An initial instructional goal could be “Point to the …” or “Do you want …?”.

Moreover, opportunities to promote initiations of interactions for children, can be maximized by arranging the children’s usual environments in such ways that they encourage initiations; favourite snacks, toys, books can be put on visible places but out of reach of children, so that they are likely to evoke initiations.

c. Strategies for Social Skills Development

Mrs. Vina mentioned that students with autism need special assistance and guidance from teachers to develop their social interaction skill. Most of children with autism have extreme difficulty in perceiving or assuming other people’s thoughts, feelings and intentions, sometime this is called mind blindness.

“Children with autism have cognitive deficit that leads to particular behavior like: fear and unfriendly because of difficulty in predicting others’ behaviors; lack of empathy due to misunderstanding emotions, no interaction with others because of the inability to understand others’ thoughts and feelings”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

Students with autism basically have a potential to interact with adults, yet they tend to ignore their peers. They never want to share their stuffs like toys to others. Furthermore, they are more interested or even
obsessed in the object material instead of playing with imagination as what normal children usually do.

“During break time, students are mixed with other students under guidance of teacher. We support them to interact with other students and teachers like asking them to say hello and shaking hands. If these kind of simple actions are continuously done every day, it will support students’ social skill”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

Mrs. Umi asserts

“For certain students who can communicate though it is limited, usually we invite them to play together with their peer in other classes. We also train them to get usual to sharing toys with others”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.30)

Based on the observation, the researcher discovered that all classroom staffs are involved in delivering instruction, including during out of classroom activities such as lunch and recess. Students are also trained self-helps such as toileting every certain time. Mrs. Umi says

“I give them very simple instruction with simple word, for example ‘sit well’ and repeat it until they can do it. We also train them toileting and other basic self-help”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.30)

While in another place Mrs. Raras conveys

“We start from the simple things (instructions) like ‘sit well’ and repeat it till the children understand how to sit well. Behavioral treatment is aimed to enable the students to be accepted in daily life and social (normal) life. Without behavioral treatments, children will never understand the difference between good and bad behavior. They do not know what is naughty. Usually, we apply reward and
punishment in behavior treatments”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 10.00)

Following up on the previous statement of reward and punishment, the question is continued on what kind of reward or punishment in which she usually applies.

“Usually we give the same instruction 3 times and if the children are able to do the instruction, teachers will reward them with the things they like. So, before conducting behavior treatment, we do observe the children’ favorite things, whether it is toys or foods, we should vary them. If we give the same reward all the time, the treatment will not be successful”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 10.00)

“For the punishment...sometimes we ignore them or we say ‘No’. That is considered as a punishment. When children want something like toys while we are doing instructions, we will not give them (the toys). Although they are usually crying and begging, teachers should be consistent not to give the toys”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 10.00)

During the class, the teacher provides a story book which full of pictures and ask the students to read, or the teacher will read for them in case they cannot read yet, and will then ask questions.

“To make the students understand the subjects, sometimes I use a story book. The story line can help a lot to explain whether some activities are good or bad to do. I also use story to teach math”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 10.00)

d. Strategies for Managing Inappropriate Behavior

All children with autism present with repetitive behaviors.

Repetitive behavior is handled in different ways. One way is that it is
noted and corrected. Teachers will tell the children they are doing a specific behavior and then tell those children ways to stop performing this behavior or suggest an alternative action. Another technique that is used is ignoring a certain behavior in the hopes that the child will stop doing it. Accordingly, Mrs. Umi says

“…when they are doing inappropriate behaviors like hitting their own head or hitting the teacher, I will ignore them for a while or do the things they hate the most like hold them tightly until they stop”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Monday, 21 July 2014: 11.00)

According to Mrs. Raras, some students also appear obsessive toward something. When discussing obsessions in autism, the term 'obsessions' is used narrowly, to indicate strong, repetitive interests. First there needs to be some thought as to how much of a problem the obsession or special interest is for the child and also the family and others such as teachers or therapists. It has to be decided whether or not to intervene or change behavior (including special interests or obsessions) by considering these questions: Does the behavior endanger the child or others? Does the behavior increase the likelihood of social rejection or isolation? Does the behavior interfere with or preclude participation in enjoyable activities and an education program? Will the behavior be acceptable in 5 years time? Etc.

Nevertheless, there is an upside to obsessions and special interests. They can be used as rewards and motivators to teach new skills and behaviors. Sometimes, it is more successful to use of objects of
obsession rather than only using the more usual reinforcers such as stickers, food and stars to reward on task performance, and to decrease inappropriate behaviors during work and play sessions. Some special interests also provide a source of enjoyment for young children who have limited play skills. Mrs. Vina explained about this by mentioning example;

“…Ogy (name of the student whom she was teaching) has an obsession toward robot. He wants to play robot toys all the time. Then I give him paraffin so he can create robot toys by himself”. (Interview conducted at Talenta Kids on Friday, 18 July 2014: 09.00)

B. Discussion

1. The Profile of Teaching and Learning Process in Talenta Kids

It is noted that the total number of students currently registered in Talenta Kids is around 20 students range from the age of 3 till 14. However, the number keeps changing for the fact that some students quit in a halfway and some others enroll the school anytime without necessarily waiting for the new academic year.

From the result of observation, the researcher found that the students with autism studying with a one to one aide. According to Wayne Steedman (2014, p. 02), Schools assign one-to-one-aides to children for various reasons: behavior management, instructional support, activities of daily living (i.e. toileting, dressing, hygiene, etc.), social skills training, task redirection, discreet trial training, etc. If the child needs the support
of a one-to-one-aide to receive a free appropriate public education, the aide should be assigned to the child, no matter what the task. In line with the Steedman’s theory, one of the teachers at Talenta Kids’ said in the interview that one-to-one aide is conducted because each student has different needs and characteristics that required them to apply different curriculum and instructional strategies of teaching.

According to Robertson, Chamberlain and Kasari (2003), the role of the one-to-one aide is to help keep the student focused on his/her task, to provide any modifications to the environment necessary, to help increase their understanding, minimize social and/or academic frustration, reduce behavioral problems and help the student work in small groups with other students. The presence of a one-to-one aide does not appear to affect the quality of the teacher-student relationship (Robertson, Chamberlain & Kasari, 2003, p. 12).

In America, one-to-one aide is mostly conducted in inclusive class setting. Referring to some journals, the one-to-one aide or is also called paraprofessional is applied not only for students with autism but also for students with other disabilities whereas each of those students are assisted by private staff or teacher while they are learning in regular class. It is different from this study in which the class is in the form of exclusive or special education setting.
The school is started at 08.00 a.m. and ended at 13.00 p.m. for Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, meanwhile, it is ended at 11.00 for Friday and Saturday. However, each student only studies for about 3 hours per day in average because of the school’s rolling system. What means by rolling system here is every student has their own schedules which enable them to learn in one-to-one aide. The rolling system is conducted because of the limitation of the teachers and the fact that students with autism have limitation of concentration that prevent them to study in such a long time.

Dealing with the curriculum used in Talenta Kids, it is confirmed that the teachers design their own curriculum by combining Regular Education Curriculum (national curriculum) with Special Education Curriculum (SLB). They vary the curriculum for each student with several considerations after knowing the student’s characteristic. This is in accordance with the decree of National Education Standards Agency (BSNP) which gives freedom to individual schools to determine the curriculum because each school has different needs in educating children with autism.

It is also said that curriculum for teaching autism should be made different for each individual. This is consistent with the nature of the autism spectrum. For example, there are children who need to learn communication with intensive, who need to learn how to take care of themselves, and there is also a need to focus only on academic issues.
There is no single behaviour that is always typical of autism and no behaviour that would automatically exclude an individual child from a diagnosis of autism, even though there are strong commonalities, especially in social deficits. (Tavulari, 2004, p. 01)

Teachers have the vital job of compiling a curriculum that meets the needs of the autistic student. According to Dawson and Osterling (1997), the curriculum content for autistic students should address the ability to attend to elements of the environment, the skill of imitating others, the use and comprehension of language, appropriate play with toys, and social interaction. Furthermore, these skills should be taught in highly supportive teaching environments that are predictable and routines and employ generalization strategies.

Furthermore, the question is continued on how the children are diagnosed to be considered as students with autism in order to prepare them to special classes. The teachers explained about the existence or the use of report from the doctor medical report and parents. Also there is use of screening checklist, from National Autistic Centre which assess communication skills, language, social interaction, imagination, sensory, cognitive and behavior.
2. Teaching strategies for Students with Autism

a. Classroom management

Due to the students’ extreme sensory sensitivity, they may find the noise and visual stimuli in regular classrooms over-stimulating. Teachers need to set environmental conditions so that autistic children can attend to, and comprehend instruction.

The finding shows that the teachers set the isolated and visually bare work spaces and physical barriers that separate work and play areas. The classroom is purposely designed in small size to foster the concentration of the students with autism and to limit their moving around in case the students are hyperactive.

The classrooms are completed with various toys and pictures which are age-appropriate that help teachers deliver the learning materials. Those stuffs can also be used to reinforce students to do instructions.

According to literatures, autistic children need to be motivated and reinforced through specific techniques (Perko & McLaughlin quoted from Roberts, 2007, p. 56). Mesibov and Shea (quoted from Roberts, 2007, p. 56) also emphasize the importance of fostering independence in autistic students. To this end, teachers need to design and organize environments so that students look for and understand routines, visual cues and organizational strategies. In sum, it is vital
that autistic students have individualized programs that meet their needs (Schreibman, quoted from Roberts, 2007, p. 56).

Examining the findings and theories suggested by some experts and checklist of quality classroom indicator from CARD, the researcher concludes that the classroom management in Talenta Kids approximately meets the standard of classroom for autism.

b. Strategies for Communication Development

The teachers of this study apply different methods of teaching communication for each student with autism. Yet, the methods mostly derived from ABA approach. One of the methods, according to a teacher is what so called incidental teaching strategy. According to Hart and Risley (quoted from Roberts, 2007, p. 23), incidental teaching uses techniques that promote generalization and spontaneous use of emerging skills.

There are four steps involved in incidental teaching, which include: arranging a setting that contains materials of interest to the child, waiting for the child to initiate an interaction about an object of interest, asking for more elaborate language or approximations to speech and providing the object for which the child initiated the interaction. Accordingly, the teacher provides some toys which are the students’ favorite. Those students will forcedly ask the teacher to give them the toys. Although some of them have severe difficulty in
speaking, and they tend to pull the teachers’ hand to grab the toys, they at least show their initiation to communicate.

The most important things in teaching communication for students with autism are consistency and continuity. Hence, the reinforcement is highly needed. In this study, the teachers apply reward and punishment as the reinforcement. The reward is given when the students are able to imitate teachers’ models or give an appropriate response toward teachers’ instructions. The reward itself may be in the form of toys, foods, or other stuffs that the students like. Even, a praise like saying ‘great’ or ‘smart’ is also can be a reward.

c. Strategies for Social Skills Development

Learners with autism need to interact with other students, because there is opportunity to the development of social interaction. Student can learn better when exposed to the general education environment under teacher assistance or with peers. According to Vygotsky’s social learning theory, teachers and peers are very important in the development of a child since teachers are acting as scaffolding and child can learn from more capable peers to acquired level of development. Theory of learning emphasizes; all kind of interaction and participation in the activity has an effect to the development of a child, and child can learn from peers. Autistic children have difficulty in social skill but still they can learn and
develop their skill for social interaction if proper support will be provided.

Although Talenta Kids is a school with one-to-one aide, in accordance with the above theory, the teachers make sure that students have opportunity to interact with their peers and other teachers. During break time, the teachers invite their students to play together in the school’s playground. The autistic students are encouraged to greet each other and shake hand. They are also trained to share their toys. The purpose of this activity is to learn to make friends and to be friends. However, the training is never successful in the first try. The teachers should make it as a daily habit.

A teacher in this study explains that; students with autism have extreme difficulty in perceiving or assuming other people’s thoughts, feelings and intentions, sometime this is called mind blindness. The study shows that teachers highly monitor their students to make sure the students do not hurt each other.

According to Baron & Cohen (1995, p. xiii), Theory of Mind can be summed up as a person’s inability to understand and identify the thoughts, feelings and intentions of others. Individuals with autism can encounter or have difficulty recognizing and processing the feelings of others, which is sometimes referred to as ‘mind-blindness’. As a result of this mind-blindness, people with autism may not realize if another person’s behaviors are intentional or unintentional.
Because of that ‘mind-blindness’ reason, according to a teacher, another significant way to help students with autism develop their social skills is by using social story. A Social Story might then be used to explain social situations in terms of what another person might be thinking and/or why they may behave in certain ways; thus reducing or removing the confusion and unpredictability (Ali & Frederickson, 2006, p. 355).

d. Strategies for Managing Repetitive Behavior

Autism is defined as having three different components: qualitative impairments in social interaction, qualitative impairments in communication, and restricted repetitive and stereotyped patterns of behavior, interests, and activities.

The study shows that the students with autism appear with different ‘unique’ behaviors. Because their unusual behaviors sometimes endanger their-selves and/or other people around them, teachers view that it is necessary for them to omit those behaviors from those students with autism. Moreover, their inappropriate behaviors are frequently unaccepted in normal people world and may draw them from social life. However, there are also some ‘unique’ behaviors showed by students with autism which only need to be managed instead of to be omitted. Therefore, teachers should notice each student’s uniqueness in order to give them appropriate treatment. All children were screened before entry into the class.
The Repetitive Behavior Scale (RBS) is used to measure the extremes of repetitive behavior. It is made up of four separate behavioral checklists: the stereotypy checklist, the self-injury checklist, the compulsion checklist, and the tic checklist. Each checklist provides a set of discrete, observable topographies of the certain repetitive behavior (Gabriella, 2004, p. 05)

Repetitive behavior is handled in different ways. One way is that it is noted and corrected. The teachers will tell the children they are doing a specific behavior and then tell them the ways to stop performing this behavior or suggest an alternative action. Another technique that is used by teachers is ignoring a certain behavior in the hopes that the child will stop doing it.

The structure of the class refers to the rules and requirements for participation for students, the schedule of activities for each week, and the way behavior is reinforced or not reinforced. The purpose of the learning is reiterated every single week. The behaviors that are expected: eyes on speaker, mouth quiet, body still, ears listening, and hands free ("Give Me Five!"). Rewards in the form of puzzle or other objects are given immediately to a child who is displaying or working on displaying a certain behavior they have trouble controlling. Reinforcement of appropriate behaviors is constantly done, as well as correction of inappropriate behaviors. The schedule consists of
different games that focus on different appropriate behaviors, as well as a snack and relaxing time.
CHAPTER V

CLOSURE

This chapter presents the conclusion based on the discussion and analysis. Recommendation of this study is also presented here.

A. Conclusions

Based on the result of data analysis, the researcher draws the following conclusions:

1. The profile of Teaching and Learning Activity in Talenta Kids Salatiga

Talenta Kids Salatiga is a school for students with autism which applies exclusive or special education system. The teachers modify the national/regular curriculum and curriculum for special education with the students’ needs in order to meet the appropriate teaching methods.

Because every student with autism appears with different characteristics that influence student learning need, the teachers vary the curriculums and the teaching strategies for each of them. The learning process is conducted in one-to-one aide that enables the teacher to highly monitor the improvement of the students. What differentiate between this study and the previous is that one-to-one aide is commonly used in inclusive setting while the school in this study applies exclusive or special education setting.
2. Teaching Strategies for Students with Autism applied in Talenta Kids

There are different strategies in supporting students with autism to develop the social interaction, communication skills, and behavior management in the classroom and outside. Teachers mentioned that so far, the most successful strategies are derived from ABA approach, among others are: Incidental Teaching, Social Story, and Discrete Trial Training. Nevertheless, the modification of more than one strategies of teaching is determined significant considering the condition of the students and the kind of impairment that student experienced.

The teachers mentioned that reinforcement is one of the important parts of teaching strategy. It is important because students with autism need continuity and consistency in the learning process. The reinforcement that commonly used by the teachers is by giving reward and punishment.

3. The benefit of the Teaching Strategies Conducted by the Teachers Toward Students’ Learning Needs

Among many approaches and strategies proposed by some experts, the teachers know a broad range of instructional strategies appropriate to their area of specialization and the subject discipline they teach, and know which strategies are appropriate to help different students achieve different outcomes.

Teachers firstly decide the goal of the learning that students need to achieve at the end. Therefore, in order to monitor each student’s
improvement and to measure whether the teaching strategies are successful or not, the teachers record every detail instructions, students’ responses toward the instruction, and students’ achievements in every day.

Based on the teachers’ reports, most of the students are able to meet the expectation of the learning goal by the end of the academic years. Some of the students are even transferred into regular school which means that they are already acceptable in normal life.

B. Suggestions

The finding gives the following suggestions for the improvement of teaching and learning for the students with autism to develop the social interaction, communication skills, and repetitive behavior managements. Based on the findings and conclusions, the researcher put forward the following suggestions:

1. Teachers’ preparation both for public or special education schools

   The increase of knowledge among the teacher is very important, the government and other stakeholders should prepare seminars, workshop and provide scholarship for further studies. It is also important for the government to develop a curriculum specified for teaching students with autism.

2. Ways for teachers’ improvement

   The school should ensure that there is an interactive environment among teachers and students and students with students. This could be through improving the learning environment and the availability of
learning material for students with autism, also teachers should improve sense of responsibility to improve social interaction.

3. Parents’ involvements

Parents should actively take a part in monitoring their autistic children and consulting with the teachers in order to support their learning goals.