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EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIFIC LEARNING DISABILITY: CASE STUDY ON SECOND GRADE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WITH UNDERACHIEVEMENT

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Abstract

Introduction, The purpose of this study is description an objective result of Assessment for Learning and Modality Profiling who early identified student with Specific Learning Disability (SpLD/LD). Objectives, Participants in this study were 25 students (13 boys and 12 girls) in second grade elementary school (Ages 8-9 years old) with 24 non-disability students and one student with motoric disability, class room teacher, parents, and headmaster. Method, Using case study this research describes five of the eight steps of the Special Education Approach: (1) Screening, (2) Evaluation, (3) Eligibility Determination, (4) Individualized Educational Program (IEP) Meeting, and (5) Write IEP. Findings, Students who showed frustration level in the result of the Academic Assessment (Reading, Writing, and Math) were 38% (62,5% for one skill and 37,5% for all the skills). With the result of the developmental Assessment of DVA (L) and JML (L) there were no obstacles, while RST (L) was identified as having obstacles in skills of social, cognitive (correspondence and conservation), perception, and Language (pronunciation). Conclusions, To identified as SpLD the students need multidisciplinary approach. Modality Profiling for underachiever to provide the earliest intervention, so there is an increase in learning outcomes.

Keywords: Learning Disability; Assessment; Modality Profiling.

A. Introduction

The purpose of education is to make students godly, knowledgeable, ethical, and fully human beings as stipulated in the National Education Goals, Undang-undang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional No. 20 tahun 2003. Elementary School is compulsory education that must be taken by students for six levels, starting from the age of 7-13 years old. Before entering Elementary School, students first follow the Early Childhood Education level to get pre-academic skills. But un-fortunately, there are still many students who do not enter the early childhood education level before the elementary school level. The results of a 2016 study published in suara.com, only about 35% of the 48 million children who are early childhood education, besides that according to UNICEF it takes 75% of children who go to Early Childhood Education to create a golden generation**.**

Pre-academic skills relate to the skills needed for school readiness, including the ability to hold a pencil correctly, understand sequences, solve puzzles, match shapes, function in social groups, concentrate on doing assignments, adapt, solve problems, use the right language, sit and hear stories (Jowett & Sylva, 1986). Lack of Pre-Academic skills causes students to experience difficulties in developing academic skills, namely reading, writing, and Math (Jowett & Sylva, 1986).

There have been many studies on how to improve student achievement, especially in the case of Academic skill. However, this study will discuss the factors that underlie these students experiencing low academic achievement. Because many students still have experience of underachievement even though they are given various approaches and methods, until finally because they have not found the right way they are always left behind and have an impact on their self-confidence (Suryani, 2010).

Identification and assessment as a first step to find the modality profiling of students with SpLD. Even SpLD has the potential to achieve both non-academic and academic achievements, so it is often assumed that learning disabilities are not a recipe for failure, with special approaches and support will provide unlimited opportunities that can be achieved by individuals with SpLD (Horowitz, 2014). So this research aims to identify students who have underachievement and find a modality profiling to be given an Individualized Educational Program (IEP) by taking a special educational approach.

Specific Learning Disability

Learning Disability (LD) or Specific Learning Disability (SpLD) have different terms in each country (Al-Yagon Michan, et al, 2013), but basically what Barriers to Learning mean here are when students experience difficulties in literacy, numeracy, and difficulties in following classroom instructions (van Kraayenoord, 2002; van Kraayenoord & Elkins, 2004; Al-Yagon Michan et al, 2013). LD/SpLD is a psychological syndrome that causes learning difficulties in children (Raharjo Trubus, et al, 2011). Classification of SpLD includes dyslexia (difficulty reading), dysgraphia (difficulty writing), dyscalculia (difficulty counting), some experience difficulties in nonverbal.

Learning disability are different from learning difficulty (Suryani, 2010). Based on the standard IQ test (Wechsler's Intelligence Scale), intellectual disabilities have an IQ score below 70, slow learners have an IQ score range between 71-74, and to be able to meet SpLD requirements only for children who have an average intelligence score of IQ 85-or more (Karande, Kanchan, & Kulkarni, 2008). Most of the population of SpLD has an IQ above the average even among them have a gift known as 2e (Two-Exceptional) Gifted with LD (Giftedness with Learning Disability).

According to research, the student population who has SpLD reaches 10%, it is predicted that there are 2-3 students in the class (B. Butterworth & Kovas, 2013). This shows that the SpLD population is high and exists in every class. If not identified, it will affect academic achievement and bad environmental labeling of children will affect their self-confidence (self-concept) (Cruickshank, 1980).

Special Education Approach

Learner (1988) stated that there are several roles of special education for children with special needs in schools, including (1) compiling a program design for the identification, assessment, and learning of children with special needs, (2) participating in screening, assessment, and evaluation of children with special needs, 3) consult with relevant experts (psychologists, child medical specialists) and interpret their reports, (4) carry out tests, both formal and informal tests, (5) participate in the development of individualized educational programs, (6) implement educational programs that be individualized, (7) hold meetings and interviews with parents, (8) collaborate with regular teachers or classroom teachers to understand children and provide more

effective learning, (9) help children develop self-understanding and gain hope of success, and belief in the ability to overcome the obstacles it has. In the article written by Dewi (2018), The implementation of the assessment for student with disabilities consists of (1) identification, (2) references, (3) assessment, (4) decisions, (5) program design, (6) program implementation, (7) evaluation, and (8) Results of the study.

To identify, special education experts, class teachers, parents, and the closest people to the child can include in this process (Dewi, 2018). In this study, the instrument used refers to the Student with Disability Identification Tool by Gunawan (yr.) Which consists of **form1.** Child development information, **form2.** Parent/guardian data, **form3.** identification of Disability tool is base on the observed symptom check-list, **form4**. List of children indicated with disabilities and requiring special needs services, **form5.** This selection process is the first step to Identify Students with Special Needs in the class (Rofiah, 2011).

After being identified, an assessment then carried out, which is an assessment that is structured systematically to determine the abilities of students and the barriers they have, aimed at designing special education programs/special services by the stages of ability and the results of the analysis of the obstacles experienced by students. The difference between assessment and evaluation lies in the time of implementation is an assessment process that is carried before program creation and evaluation after program implementation (Dewi, 2018). The assessment carried out in non-formal, meaning that the tests carried out are not standardized so that they can be designed by a teacher/an expert in the field of Special Education. The assessment instrument consists of a theory that is derived into its scope so that applicable items can explore the needs of students. The assessments carried out include Academic assessment and progress. The assessment is carried out to explore the obstacles and potentials of student with underachievement or known as searching for Variant Error and Variant Strategy. Furthermore, Modality Profiling mapped to find out how Student with special needs is experiencing difficulties and the most effective learning styles. Only then can the Individualized Educational Program (IEP) be developed so that it is appropriate and in line with the needs of students with special needs.

To get more optimum results, special education teachers should be able to give recommendations to growth and develop-ment doctors, psychologists, nutritionists, or

even therapists so that they can be further identified. Collaboration between disciplin-es is very influential in progress for a student with a disability. In other words, diagnostic services should be carried out under the auspices of a multidisciplinary team. These teams consist of experts (psychologists, special education teachers, speech therapists, etc.) (Al-Yagon Michan et al., 2013).

In analyzing this research using a special educational approach which consists of: (1) Screening, (2) Evaluating, (3) Eligibility Determination, (4) IEP Meeting, (5) Write IEP, (6) Provide Service, (7) Report Progress, (8) Reevaluate, and (9) IEP Review. Of the nine steps, the scope is reduced following the discussion in this article, namely the initial identification and the modality profiling so that it is limited to the implementation of the five steps approach.

The following are research questions that guide the review of this case study:

Research Question 1: How is the identification process of underachieve-ment students carried out at SDN X Kota Bandung?

Research Question 2: How are the results of the assessment conducted on under-achievement students at SDN X Kota Bandung?

Research Question 3: How is the formulation of a modality profiling for underachieve-ment students at SDN X Kota Bandung?

B. Research Methodology

This research is a case study describing five of the nine steps in the special education approach to meet the needs of the student with underachievement or those who have low achievement in inclusive schools. The steps of this research are: **First,** identifica-tion, consisting of two Rare cases, namely the identification of cases and identification of problems and checking with the Disability Identification Instrument.

Second, after obtaining the results of the observation of the identification of children with special needs, then students who experience learning barriers are given an Academic Assessment to explore students' abilities in the aspects of reading, writing, and math. After using the test method, the results of the academics assessment were obtained quantitatively, the next step was to explore the assessment results qualitatively by conducting interviews with the students concerned. The interview was conducted to find out where the students' mistakes were in solving a problem or Variant Error, after finding the location of the error, the next step was to explore why the error could occur and describe the factors of

the subject version that had been observed or called the variant strategy.

Third, namely mapping the obstacles and potentials that students have or what is called the Modality Profile. The results were obtained after making observations, assessments, and interviews with students. Barriers are described to know the extent of the ability and where the disability lies, while the potential of students is observed to look for learning styles and how students learn.

Fourth, namely the preparation of the IEP which is formed based on the results of the mapping of the learner's modality profiling, to get where the urgency of the problem should get more attention so that interven-tions can be given that are prepared by considering the existing lesson schedule so that it does not interfere with both student with disabilities and students non-disabilities. The next stage is the implementation stage.

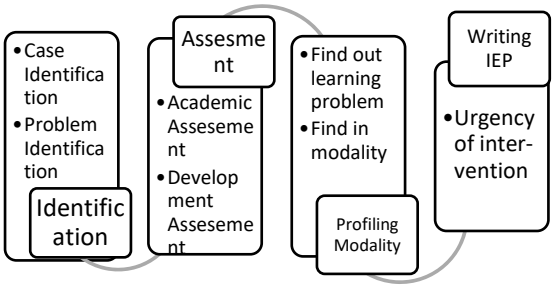

Figure 1. Research Steps

The subjects of this study consisted of 25-second grade students considering of 13 boys and 12 girls aged 8-9 years old with 24 non-disability students and one student with motoric and intellectual disability, a homeroom teacher, parent, and principal.

To analyzing the results of research findings, answers to research questions are needed: **(research question 1)** The first step the researcher takes is selecting a school and asking the principal for permission to carry out the research. The reason for choosing this was because it was a school that had received students with disabilities since 2005, especially one whose house was close to the school or *zonasi* system, considering that in that area get to the Special School took a long time.

In this research question, the researcher will conduct a screening to carry out the identification of children with special needs, both identification of cases and problems, so that second grade is selected based on the recommendations of the principal and teachers of the teaching subjects. **(research question 2)** then evaluating this process is evaluated using learning assessments, namely academic and developmental.

The assessment is carried out in non-formal with instruments compiled by researchers based on *Kompetensi Inti and Kompetensi Dasar* taken from second-grade K-13 down to first-grade to pre-academic.

Next, go to the Eligibility Determination stage, namely checking back, that is, the subject that has been assessing academically is then given a developmental assessment and also an interview to explore the variant error and variant strategy of the problems faced by student wit disability. **(Research question 3)**

To answer the last question, the researcher carried out the IEP Meeting stage, at this stage, a case conference was held with the principal, homeroom teacher, and subject teachers. After finding students who are suspected of being underachievement, then it is proposed to make IEP and proceed to the Write IEP stage by mapping the Modality Profiling and building collaboration with the homeroom teacher.

C. Result and Discussion

This section will present a descriptive of the results of a case study conducted at SDN X Bandung regarding the initial identification of students who have underachievement, based on the characteristics of students who have low achievement in class. **Table 1** shows the results of identification of cases found, which contain symptoms of obstacles experienced by students in the class. **Table 2** shows the results of the academic assessment of students who show low academic achievement in the identification of problems shown in **Figure 1**. **Table 3** shows the results of the development assessment consisting of developmental aspects, then an analysis of the modalities and barriers to these aspects is carried out. **Table 4** is the result of the analysis of the modality profiling which is presented as the basis for preparing the IEP, which consists of the program to be developed, the initial ability of students as a modality which is a based line, activities that will be carried out during a certain period to improve academic achieve-ment, the methods used in implementing activities, and evaluation as the ultimate goal of implementing the program made.

Case and Problem Identification

Based on the case study conducted in the field **(see Figure 1),** it shows: 24% of students experience learning barriers where there are four students with one student with a disability, namely experiencing motoric obstacles and three others who have not been identified by professionals, only experiencing learning barriers and leading to the identification of SpLDs. One person has difficulty reading, another is known to be weak in short-term memory, and another is identified as having the weak concentration

and a lot of behaviour in class so that it seems to seek attention from both teachers and friends.

The identification of problems found **(see Figure 1)** shows: Reading skills (56% independent level, 32% instruction level, and 12% frustration level). Writing skills (48% independent level, 36% instruction level, and 16% frustration level). Counting ability (32% independent level, 40% instruction level, and 28% frustration level). The instrument used as a problem identification tool was thematic learning evaluation material part six with the theme "***Caring for Animals and Plants***" in the second-grade Elementary students' books. The reason for using this material is because when the research was carried out, the teacher and students were discussing thematic material part seven, so the researcher thought that the students had finished implementing thematic part six so that the results were expected to measure the students' ability to master Calistung's abilities.

Academic and Development Assessment

This assessment is carried out in two stages, namely classically at the time of identification and individually to explore deeper problems. The assessment individualized was carried out on three students who truly had underachievement and frustration levels in the Academic's ability which the problem was carried out identification activities. The results of this study showed **(see table 2):** DVA (50% reading ability, 38% writing ability, and 38% calculating ability), JML (40% reading ability, 13% writing ability, and 31% computing ability), RST (0% reading ability, 38% writing ability, and 30% numeracy ability).

The criteria for determining are as follows: Independent level above 76%, Instruction level 50-75%, and frustration level 49% and above (Soendari & Nani, 2011). From the results of the assessment, the individualized assessments and interviews were conduct-ed again to obtain the variant error and variant strategy conducted by the students.

DVA indicates that it is difficult to read comprehension, this is due to not understanding the interrogative sentence. Meanwhile, writing shows that there is no space and time in writing so that it is never finished and is often used as homework because when writing DVA there is too much movement and it seeks attention from both the teacher and his friends. The difficulty in Math is that it cannot compute addition and subtraction with a borrowing system, because DVA does not understand borrowing

techniques, so the ability to calculate it is still semi-abstract.

The ability of JML Academic has the same case as DVA, it's just that the factor that causes writing problems experienced by DVA is due to being easily tired when writing and having weaknesses in short-term memory so that it is difficult to follow dictation and remember what is seen in the text. For the ability to calculate JML does not understand the place value, for example, 203 is read twenty and three and this is repeated.

Table 1. The Result of Identification

Symptoms Observed	Amount	Information
Children with visual impairment	-	-
Children with hearing impairment	-	-
Children with intellectual disability	-	-
Children with motoric disability	1	Polio
Children with emotional and behavior disability	-	-
Children with Giftedness	-	-
Children with Specific Learning Disability	3	- reading difficulty - weak in short term memory - Concentration and attention-seeking problems

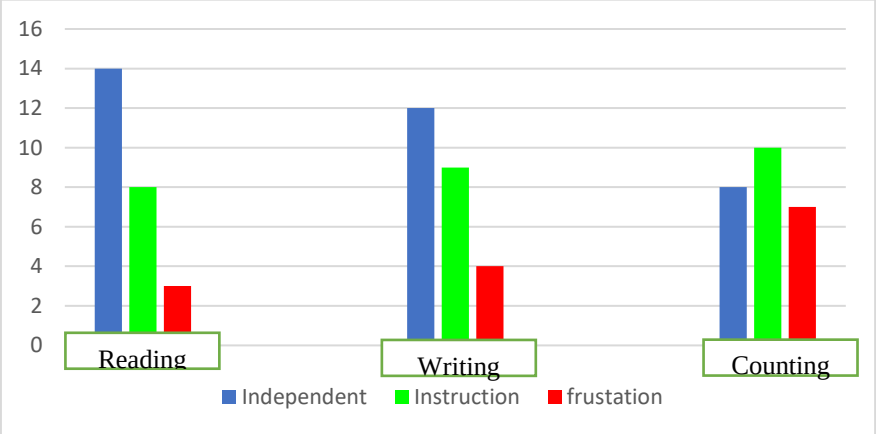

Figure 1. Identification of Learning Problems

Table 2. The Result of Academic Assessment

Initial	Reading		Writing		Counting	
	Variant Error	Variant Strategy	Variant Error	Variant Strategy	Variant Error	Variant Strategy
DVA	Reading comprehension	Don't understand about question sentence	No space Incomplete writing	To much movement Looking for attention	Computing (counting hundreds by tens with subtraction	Mistaken in placing the reduction with the borrowing system

					down technique)	
JML	Reading comprehe nsion	Don't understand about question sentence	No space Incomplet e writing	Easily getting tired when writing Weak in short-term memory	Aritmatic(recognizes number names based on place values) Computin g (counting hundreds by tens with subtraction down technique)	203 = twenty with three Mistaken in placing the reduction with the borrowing system
RST	Read the beginning	Don't know alphabet	Cannot follow dictation	Disable to read	Aritmatic(recognizes number names based on place values) Computin g (counting hundreds by tens with subtraction down technique)	203 = twenty with three Mistaken in placing the reduction with the borrowing system

Table 3. The Result of Developmental Assessment

Aspect	DVA		JML		RST	
	Modality	Weakness	Modality	Weakness	Modality	Weakness
Social	Cooperative Competition Sympathy Empathy	-	Cooperative Sympathy Empathy	Competition	Sympathy Empathy	cooperative competition
Emotion al	All aspects	-	All aspects	-	All aspects	-
Cognitif	Classification Ordering corresponden ce conservation	-	Classificatio n Ordering coressponde nce conservation	-	classificatio n Ordering	coresspondenc e concervation
Languag e	Expressive Verbal	-	Expressive verbal	-	Expressive verbal	Artikulation

Motoric	Artikulation Gros Fine balance coordination	-	Artikulation Gros Fine balance coordination	-	Gros Fine balance coordination	-
Perseptio n	Visual Auditif Kinesthetic Tactile	-	Visual Auditif Kinesthetic Tactile	-	-	Visual Auditif Kinestetik Taktil

Table 4. Individualized Educational Program

	Program	Modality	Activity	Method	Evaluation
JML	Extracing information from reading texts	Able to read well	- Remember words - Compile SPOK sentences - Make sentence from pictures - Make question according to the pictures - Answering question according to the picture - Create SPOK patterned sentences and create question - Create SPOK patterned sentence and answering question based on SPOK	- Games - Question answered - Task	- Create the question based on sentences - Answering question based on text in thematic book
RST	Reads vowels and consonant that are made into patterned syllables	- Has a visual discriminatio n modality (distinguishe d colors) - Good performance in concentratio n	- Visual perception exercise (puzzle with difficulty levels) - Exercise auditive perception by distinguishing sounds - Vowel exercised continued with syllables with a pattern of “KV” to “KV-KV”	- Games education - Exercise - Task	- Read syllables with a pattern of “KV” to “KVKVKV” - Read syllables and arrange syllables into meaningful words

Likewise, RST has similar variations in the difficulty of academics as the two previous subjects. It's just that RST cannot read, even has difficulty reading the beginning, because it has not memorized the letters of the alphabet too much, so to identify the sound of the letters must be lured with a complete alphabetical arrangement. Not yet being able to read RST has affected his ability to write, especially since second-grade have started to participate in writing dictations.

Developmental assessment skills show **(see table 3):** DVA (Social Development 82.7%, Emotional development 80%, cognitive development 75%, Language develop-ment 94.28%, motoric development

94.7%, perception development 85.23%) has a conclusion that the development is equivalent to age. JML (Social develop-ment 64%, emotional development 77.5%, cognitive development 64%, language development 90.47%, motoric develop-ment 78.7%, perception development 84%) in the aspect of social development shows that there are few obstacles. RST (Social Development 44%, Emotional Develop-ment 80%, Cognitive Development 49%, Language Development 56%, Motoric Development 65.5%, Perceptual Develop-ment 40.85%) Several aspects of develop-ment show abilities below his age such as social, cognitive development, and perception, while other developments are almost equivalent to the age of development.

The developmental assessment instrument is taken based on the developmental abilities of the age 0-8 years old according to the chronological age of the subject who is over 8 years old.

Modality Profiling

The profiling modality is taken from the assessment results **(see tables 3 and 4).** From these results, the students' abilities and barriers can be mapped. So that the results obtained: DVA (L) chronological age 8 years 4 months. The results of the analysis show that students do not need a special educational approach to improve their academic achievement, but students need attention from family and the environment to optimize student potential, such as repeating lessons at home.

JML (L) chronological age of 7 years 11 months obtained needs in the developmental aspect, namely: self-reliance training and self-confidence improvement, short-term memory training, and hand-motor muscle strength training; Meanwhile, to improve academic skills, it takes practice to recognize questions and write exercises; for program suggestions offered: games that can sharpen memory, coloring pictures, understand the function of the Subject-Predicate-Object-Description (SPOK) in sentences to understand the interrogative sentence.

RST (L) chronological age 8 years 3 months. The needs analyzed for aspects of development include: Improving students' social abilities, basic cognitive exercises, facial exercises to improve articulation skills, word games, visual stimulation, auditive, and kinesthetic. To improve their academic abilities in the form of learning to read starting from pre-reading activities, the program suggestions given by students are doing many activities that are stimulating perceptions, such as playing puzzles, visual perception games and auditive discrimination as an effort

to improve students' ability to understand the shapes and sounds of letters.

Writing Individualized Educational Program

The IEP preparation is the result of discussions with the class staff and the mapping of the modality profiling based on the results of identification and assessment **(see table 4).** Previously, three subjects deemed to require a special educational approach. However, after a series of special educational approaches were carried out, two subjects stated that they needed a special educational approach seen from the urgency of the need, namely JML and RST.

Developing IEP requires a match between the assessment objectives, curriculum goals, and parents' goals. Because for parents' expectations in learning to be achieved and get support other than at school, also, adjustments to the objectives of the curriculum are intended so as not to let go of the principle of inclusion itself, namely treating students according to their needs without any students being harmed, so as not to disturb the flow and situation learning that has been compiled by the classroom teacher.

Discussion

This section will discuss the results of research with Steps in the Special Education approach. Five of the Nine Steps will be discussed based on theory and research results.

Screening

Known as networking or what we know as identification. Identification is literally find-ing or identifying. Identification is carried out to determine the condition of a person whether their growth and development is in the normal category or not. Identification can also be done to group students based on observations, such as if a person experiences obstacles in vision, the student will be seen from his physical condition or movement. Identification activities are usually carried out by observing the behavior that appears to students **(see table 1).**

Evaluating

After finding a candidate who is suspected of having special needs in learning, then an evaluation is carried out. Evaluation is carried out by implementing the Assessment. The first assessment is Academic (read, write, math). After conducting the results of the academic assessment, the frustration level was identified and variant error and variant strategies were explored. The next assessment is to see progress **(see tables 2 and 3).**

Eligibility Determination

The determination of eligibility is based on the discovery of the formulation of the

Modality Profiling for children with special needs as a reference for whether these students deserve to be included in the category of needing Special Education Services. In this section, the teacher in charge will make a list of the results of the identification and assessment. compiled based on an analysis of whether these students need special education or services in learning. What was done in this study was that after the researcher found three students as candidates, then they were reviewed based on the results (**tables 1, 2, and 3)** and conducted interviews with the homeroom teacher and parent/guardian, two students who would get an education were obtained. or special education services in learning.

Individualized Educational Program Meeting

Furthermore, a meeting was held with paraprofessionals such as class teachers, special education teachers, psychologists or doctors, in this case, to explore more deeply the characteristics of the barriers that children have. Or in terms that are often used namely the Case Conference. In this study, because schools did not have special education teachers and special companion teachers (GPK), the case conference was held with the homeroom teacher and the principal. Because in the class the responsibility of the class with the homeroom teacher, so involving the homeroom role of the IEP composition will be maximized.

Write Individualized Educational Program Meeting

Formulating the IEP is to provide a program and learning approach following the results of the assessment and the learner's modality profiling. For the next stage, namely providing service, progress reports, evaluations, and IEP reviews. Is a series of IEP implementation that has been carried out on students at a certain time.

D. Conclusion

Of the 25 students, it was found that four students were identified with special needs in learning, consisting of one motoric disability and three non-disability students but identified as underachiever.

Then for disability students is not followed up, because it is a student who has been identified from the beginning as having a disability, so in this study, we want to dig deeper into the needs of non-disabled students based on class learning achievement, because non-disabled students have barriers to learning, are often overlooked, so that they get the label as students who have

underachievement and are always left behind without special treatment. Even though these students are prone to discrimination and lack of self-confidence makes their condition worse. So that in this study, we want to early identification on students who are suspect-ed of having specific learning disability.

Five of the nine special education steps have been carried out, the next stage is that special education teachers should be able to provide recommendations to class teachers and school principals so that students who are identified early get better treatment with the help of growth and development doctors, psychologists, and therapists. To know the obstacles experienced by students with various approaches, it is hoped that the results can be maximized. Because what can be done by special education teachers is initial identification, conducting assessments and providing recommendations for the next IEP and its implementation.

If students are known to have special needs from the recommendations of experts, then special education teachers can conduct an assessment to find out the child's learning ability and obstacles in learning. Support and the role of professionals in increasing performance for students with under-achievement are needed to achieve optimal development.

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