IMPROVING LEARNING CONCENTRATION THROUGH DIFFERENTIATED LEARNING IN CONTENT ASPECTS OF 4TH GRADE SD NEGERI 94 PALEMBANG

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Article Info	Abstract
	This research was motivated by the low level of student learning concentration. The purpose of this research was to make efforts to improve learning concentration through differentiated instruction in content aspects. This class action research was conducted in two cycles using the Kemmis & Taggart model. The subjects of this study were 23 students in 4th grade (A class) at State Elementary School 94 Palembang. This research aimed to enhance the learning concentration among 4th grade students at SD Negeri 94 Palembang through differentiated instruction in aspect content. The data collection technique used Likert scale questionnaires. The data analysis techniques used are both quantitative and qualitative analysis. The results of the pre-cycle research revealed that the learning concentration was 43.47% (low). In the cycle I, the learning concentration increased to 69.56% (moderate), and it further increased to 86.95% (high) in the cycle II. These results indicate that differentiated instruction successfully improved the learning concentration of 4th grade students at SD Negeri 94 Palembang. Keywords: learning concentration; content differentiated learning

A. Introduction

Education is a conscious and planned effort to create a learning environment and process, so the learners can actively develop their potential to possess spiritual and religious strength, self-control, personality, intelligence, good morals, and the necessary skills for themselves, society, nation, and country (UUSISDIKNAS, 2016). According to (Imanuel, 2015), a nation's success is determined by its education success.

In learning activities, several factors influence students' success, one of which is learning concentration. According to (Julianto et al., 2014), concentration is the ability of an individual to focus attention on an object, enabling them to remember things effectively. According to (Dalimunthe, 2019), concentration is the action of thoughts on a matter by not paying attention to other things that have nothing to do. Meanwhile, according to (Hartaty, 2017) an individual's ability to concentrate is crucial in learning and when carrying out tasks assigned by teachers. A student is said to concentrate in a lesson if they can focus on their studies.

Attention and concentration are often considered the same, but these terms differ. Attention refers to the direct awareness of received information (stimulus) to make a decision or response. On the other hand, concentration is a person's ability to focus on a specific object or during a specific time. It means the concentration process is always preceded by an individual's attention to a particular object. Therefore, concentration can be interpreted as sustained attention over a long time, where the essential requirement for such activity is the only concentration (Nusufi, 2016).

However, the reality is that currently, especially in the school environment, learning concentration among students, including elementary school students, could be higher. It is also supported by research conducted by (Kurniawan et al., 2020), which found that students have low learning concentration. It is primarily due to their short attention span, meaning they quickly shift their focus when something more attention-grabbing or

when faced with boring learning materials. In this research, the cause of students' difficulty in concentrating should be identified first, whether it is influenced by external or internal factors (Pasaremi, 2014). Therefore, after identifying the causes, it is found that the difficulties in concentration are affected by several internal factors within the students themselves, as they are still in a stage of growth and development, making them active and easily distracted by external stimuli or naturally attracted to specific objects. Besides, external factors such as the learning environment and the teaching methods employed by teachers can also contribute to the students finding the learning process boring (Hendayani, 2019).

Based on the above observations, a similar situation was observed at SD Negeri 94 Palembang, where the Practicum Field Experience 2 activities occurred. Through direct observation during the teaching and learning activities from October to December 2022 in Practicum Field Experience 1 and approximately three months from February to May 2023 in Practicum Field Experience 2, it was noticed that

many students still struggled to concentrate on the lessons provided by the teacher fully. This difficulty in concentration was evident among the 4th grade students of SD Negeri 94 Palembang. The results showed a low level of learning achievement, especially during the self-practice cycle of Practicum Field Experience 2 conducted on Wednesday, March 1, 2023. The students faced difficulties in concentrating and understanding the material. Additionally, many students needed to be more actively engaged in learning. Their attention often wandered towards external distractions, and the classroom environment was not conducive due to disruptive behavior among the students. Furthermore, the teaching methods employed by the teacher were not enjoyable, leading the students to seek their sources of entertainment and causing them to lose focus on their learning.

Based on the background and issues mentioned above, it is evident that the learning concentration of the 4th grade students in SD Negeri 94 Palembang is generally low. To address this issue, the teacher needs to choose appropriate actions. Students have

different potentials, characteristics, and learning needs. Therefore, the teacher is faced with the task of selecting teaching methods that previous experts have identified to achieve the students' learning goals (Oktapyanto, 2016). From the above, one possible solution to improve the learning concentration of students is to implement differentiated learning. According to the online KBBI (Indonesian Dictionary), differentiation means "distinction" or "discrimination". According to (Safarati, 2023), differentiated learning refers to any form or effort that can be undertaken to fulfill the needs and expectations of students. From this statement, differentiated learning is an approach that adapts to the conditions and needs of students by considering their characteristics. Differentiated learning itself has four aspects, namely differentiated process, differentiated content, differentiated products, and differentiated learning environment. Differentiated content is suitable for improving concentration and engaging students actively. By implementing differentiated learning in the content aspect, the previously passive learning will be designed to be as enjoyable as possible, ensuring that student's attention is not easily diverted to external distractions. It involves actively involving students in every learning activity.

B. Research Methodology

This research is action research. *Action Research* is a scientific activity that involves systematic and empirical thinking processes to solve problems encountered in teaching and learning processes (Sanjaya, 2016). According to Suharsimi et al. (Ali, 2017), action research reflects learning activities deliberately conducted in the classroom, involving intentional actions and occurring collectively. According to Kemmis and Mc. Taggart, as mentioned in (Hartaty, 2017), action research can be structured into a series of cycles, each consisting of four elements: planning, action, observation, and reflection. These four elements together form one cycle. Therefore, a cycle refers to steps or activities that include planning, action, observation, and reflection.

This research focuses on 23 students of the 4th grade (A class) as the subjects to improve learning concentration through differentiated learning in the content aspect. The research is conducted at SD Negeri 94 Palembang. The research takes place from April to May 2023. The data collection technique involves using a Likert-scale questionnaire with four points of 25 questions. The scoring ranges from 4 (highest) to 1 (lowest). According to Rahardjo (2013), a questionnaire is a method used to understand students through written communication by providing a list of questions that must be answered in writing by the students. The statements in this questionnaire consist of positive (+) and negative (-) statements. There are four response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). For positive statements, a score of 4 is assigned to Strongly Agree (SA), and a score of 1 is assigned to Strongly Disagree (SD). On the other hand, for negative statements, a score of 1 is assigned to Strongly Agree (SA), and a score of 4 is assigned to Strongly Disagree (SD).

The data analysis will be conducted using quantitative and qualitative techniques, using the model by Kemmis and Mc. Taggart includes steps of planning, action, observation, and reflection.
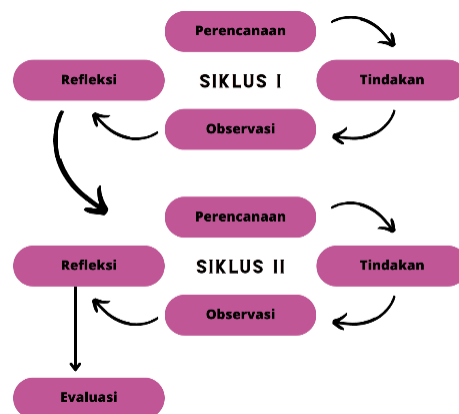
Picture 1. Method Step of Kemmis & Taggart

The success rate can be measured using the percentage of achievement to determine the changes in learning concentration through the implementation of differentiated learning strategies. The following are the assessment criteria to measure the level of success:

78 – 100 = High

60 – 77 = Moderate

43 – 59 = Low

25 – 42 = Very Low

The assessment criteria are obtained using this formula:

$$Interval = \frac{JS \times STi - STh \times JS}{amount\ of\ choices} = Result$$

Description:

JS   = Total students

STi = Highest Score

STh = Lowest Score

The success of this research is measured based on the percentage range criteria suggested by Irianto (Hartaty, 2017), namely score 0-25% (poor), score 26-50% (fair), score 51-74% (enough), and score 75-100% (good).

Next, Hidayat & Badrujaman (Hartaty, 2017) stated that the change in students' learning concentration could be measured using the following formula:

$$P = \frac{f}{n} \times 100\%$$

Description:

P = Total overall improvement

f = Total of students who changed

n = total of students

This formula is used to determine the level of success or failure in this research, as seen from the desired success percentage.

C. Result and Discussion

The first research activity involved observing the learning conditions of the 4th grade student (A class) at SD Negeri 94 Palembang, consisting of 23 students, from February to April. The findings revealed a need for more student attention during the teaching and learning activities. Their concentration on the teacher's instructions only lasted for the lesson's first 20-30 minutes. Afterward, they tended to engage in self-talk, play together, or disrupt their classmates trying to focus on their studies. Consequently, the distracted students also lost their focus due to the disturbances caused by their peers. This issue is related to Isnawati's statement (2020), which suggests that learning concentration refers to directing one's mental and behavioral energy toward the object of study while blocking or eliminating any irrelevant distractions.

Therefore, efforts are made to improve learning concentration by making learning enjoyable and student-centered through implementing differentiated learning strategies, particularly in the content aspect. According to Herwina (2021), differentiated learning is an effort to

adjust classroom learning activities to meet the learning needs of each individual.

This opportunity has three research activities, pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II of classroom action research on students' learning concentration. The pre-cycle activity started as a regular learning activity but did not emphasize differentiated learning in the content aspect. At the end of the lesson, a concentration questionnaire was distributed to the 23 students, and they honestly filled out the questionnaire based on their current condition.

Based on the results of the pre-cycle questionnaire, which is in the data analysis stage, show that the level of student concentration is still low, with a percentage of 43.47%.

The data processing results can be seen in the diagram below.
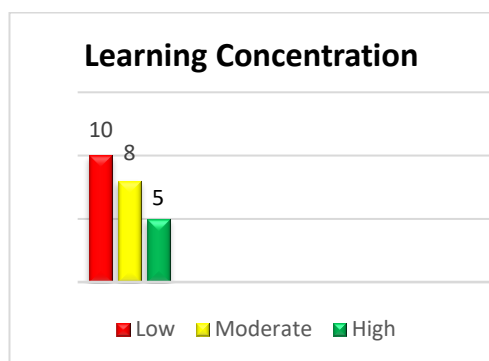
Picture 2. Diagram of Pre-Cycle Learning Concentration Level

The data shows that 10 students have low learning concentration, 8 have moderate results, and 5 have high results. Learning concentration is a psychological aspect that is sometimes challenging to be known by others except oneself, who is studying (Yulia, 2017).

The results of the questionnaire were obtained after the reflection activity. According to Suyadi (Suwartiningsih, 2021), reflection is an activity to restate what has been done so that its vision becomes clear, including its weaknesses and shortcomings. Therefore, actions were taken to improve the learning concentration of the students. The activities designed to enhance learning concentration are the implementation of differentiated learning in content. Differentiated content was utilized by providing learning materials or teaching resources with various characteristics that support different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, audiovisual, and kinesthetic. By employing this strategy, students' concentration is expected to become more focused and attentive to the learning process.

During the implementation of cycle I, actions were taken to improve learning concentration. The lesson plans that were developed already incorporated differentiated learning strategies, and the results of this research indicated an increase in learning concentration by 69.56%, which falls into the moderate category according to the assessment criteria.

The data processing results can be seen in the diagram below.
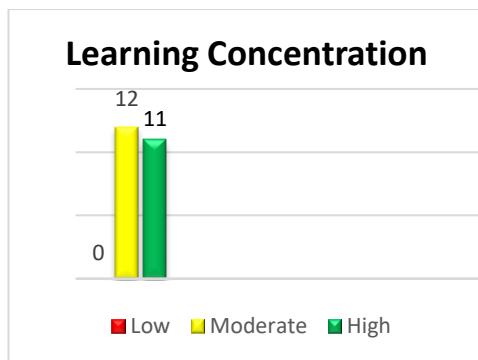
Picture 3. Diagram of Learning Concentration Level in Cycle I

From the diagram, it can be seen that there are no more students who obtained low scores on the questionnaire. The students who initially scored low have improved to the moderate category, totaling 12 students, and some students who obtained moderate scores in the pre-cycle have achieved high scores, totaling 11 students. Implementing differentiated learning strategies in the content aspect has improved concentration during teaching and learning. In cycle I, differentiated learning in content involves providing learning materials such as instructional videos, reading tasks, lectures, and demonstrations.

The improvement concentration in cycle I is consistent with previous findings that reported that implementing differentiated learning strategies in teaching can enhance students' learning activities from less active to more active (Sukendra, 2015).

The improvement observed in the pre-cycle, where the result was 43.47%, and the increase to 69.56% in cycle I through implementing differentiated learning strategies can be considered an improvement but has yet to be successful. In this study, the success criteria require reaching a success threshold of 75%. Therefore, an evaluation was conducted. In this context, evaluation refers to planning, obtaining, and providing essential information needed to generate various alternative decisions (Febriana, 2019). Based on the evaluation results, a revised plan was developed for

implementation in cycle II, which involves adding diversity to the provided content by including materials/teaching resources in slide presentations, instructional videos, reading texts, presentations, lectures, and practical/creative activities according to individual creativity.

From the implementation plan in cycle II, the research results showed an improvement from 69.56% to 86.95%, which indicates a high category according to the assessment criteria.

The data processing results can be seen in the diagram below.

Learning Concentration

20

3

0

Low   Moderate   High
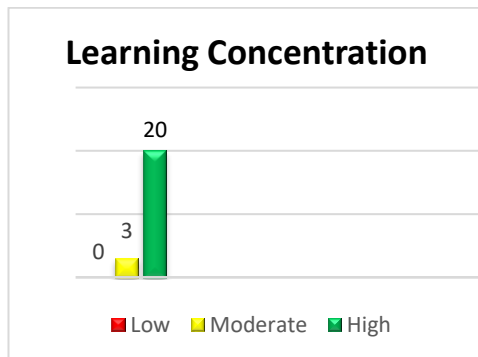
Picture 4. Diagram of Concentration Level in Cycle II

From the data in the diagram of cycle II above, it can be observed that 9 out of 12 students who initially scored in the moderate range in cycle I improved and achieved high scores. It means that 20 students significantly improved their scores in cycle II. This research is successful because the data analysis results in cycle II reached 86.98%, exceeding the success point of 75%.

Implementing differentiated learning strategies has proven to be a practical approach to improving students' learning concentration. It is further supported by research conducted by (Syarifudin, 2022), which states that the application of differentiated learning can enhance students' learning outcomes by classifying students' abilities, developing varied materials based on their abilities, and individualized approaches.

D. Conclusion

Based on the research objectives and the description of the research results, differentiated instruction in terms of content can help improve students' concentration. The pre-cycle, cycle I, and cycle II results have

significantly improved. In the precycle, the learning concentration was low at 43.47%. After implementing differentiated instruction strategies in the content aspect, the concentration increased to 69.56%, categorized as

moderate. However, since it did not reach the success point of 75%, another cycle was conducted in cycle II by adding diverse content/materials according to students' learning styles. As a result, there was a significant improvement of 86.95%, categorized as high, which successfully addressed the research objectives as it reached the success point.

Based on the research, differentiated instruction accommodates students' needs and learning styles according to their interests. Furthermore, differentiated instruction also creates an enjoyable learning experience as it centers on the student's active participation.

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