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## DESCRIPTIVE OF QUANTITATIVE DATA | RESEARCH ARTICLE

## Patterns of Social Interaction in Inclusive Education Class 5: Empirical Study at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1

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**Abstract:** This research explores the social interaction patterns of inclusion students in grade 5 of Mattoangin 1 Elementary School, focusing on their interactions with fellow inclusion students, normal students, and teachers. The research method used is a qualitative approach with data collection techniques through observation, interviews, and documentation. The results showed that: 1) There are associative social interactions among children with special needs such as cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. There is no competition dissociative social interaction but there is conflict dissociative social interaction. 2) There are associative social interactions between children with special needs and teachers such as cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. As for the dissociative social interactions between children with special needs and teachers, neither competition nor conflict was found. There are associative social interactions between children with special needs and normal children such as cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. As for dissociative social interactions between children with special needs and normal children, they rarely even occur, be it competition or opposition. The implication of this research is the importance of promoting an inclusive learning environment to improve inclusive students' participation and social experiences in basic education.

**Keywords:** Social Interaction Patterns, Inclusive Education.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Education plays an important role in improving superior and competitive human resources as an effort to face the challenges of changing and developing times that are increasingly sharp. Therefore, the development of quality Human Resources (HR) is a necessity that cannot be negotiated anymore (Mulyasa, 2009). The reality of inequity in obtaining proper education is a crucial issue in the world of education in Indonesia. This is the main factor causing many students to drop out of school. Whereas the opportunity to obtain education for every Indonesian child is a basic right that must be fulfilled by the State to produce quality Human Resources (HR). Article 31 paragraph 1 of the 1945 Constitution and Law No. 2 of 1989 on the National Education System, Chapter III paragraph 5, state that: Every citizen has the same opportunity to obtain an education. This includes all Indonesian citizens who have learning difficulties, reading (dyslexia), writing (dysgraphia), calculating (dyscalculia) or disabilities (blind, deaf, disabled, and tunalaras) and all children of this type are included in the group of Children with Special Needs (ABK). Children with disabilities have equal rights to education and to develop their potential, as stated in Law No. 23 of 2002 Article 51. It reads Children with physical and or mental disabilities are given equal opportunities and accessibility to ordinary education and special education. According to this regulation, children with disabilities need a heterogeneous school environment to prepare them for life in society.

According to Kosasih (2012), special needs children can be defined as slow or retarded children who will never succeed as children in general. Therefore, children with special needs such as learning difficulties (learning disability), consisting of general learning difficulties such as slow learners and specific learning difficulties, namely learning difficulties in certain subject areas such as reading

difficulties (dyslexia), numeracy difficulties (dyscalculia) and writing difficulties (dysgraphia), these children such as children who need special services are part of those with special needs who are entitled to the same and appropriate education so that their potential can be developed optimally with other children, who have been studying in ordinary or regular schools. However, in the absence of special education services in regular schools, these children have the potential to be bullied by their peers, repeat classes and eventually drop out of school. Inclusive Education is an educational concept that does not discriminate against children's life backgrounds both in terms of physical and mental. Inclusive education is an education service system that provides opportunities for all students who have abnormalities and have the potential for special intelligence or talent to attend education or learning in one educational environment together with students in general schools (Dadang Garinda, 2017).

Staub and Peck (in Ilahi, 2013) view inclusive education as the full placement of children with mild, moderate and severe disabilities in regular classes. Based on Staub and Peck's view, the regular class is a relevant place of learning for children with disabilities regardless of the type of disorder and its gradation. It can be concluded from several expert opinions that the concept of inclusive education is an educational concept that presents all aspects related to openness to accepting children with disabilities to obtain their basic rights as citizens. Basically, the nature of inclusive education (Faizah, 2018) seeks to provide the greatest opportunity for every Indonesian child to obtain the best and adequate educational services to build the nation's future. In accordance with the inclusive education policy stated in Permendiknas Number 70 of 2009, it states that: The education delivery system provides opportunities for all students who have abnormalities and have the potential for special intelligence or talent to attend education or learning in an educational environment together with students in general. It is known that the ideology of inclusive education internationally in the 1994 World Conference by UNESCO in Salamanca, Spain stated the commitment of Education for All emphasizing the importance of providing education for children, adolescents, and adults who need education in the regular system (Dewi, 2017). According to Wardani, et al (2014) children with special needs are children because of their disorders, requiring special assistance in learning in order to develop their potential optimally. Inclusive education requires a shift in learning from the tradition of teaching the same material to teaching each child with his or her individual needs in a classroom setting (Muzayanah, 2016). Education personnel in inclusive schools are mostly the same as in regular schools, more specifically class teachers, subject teachers and special mentor teachers (Haryono, 2015). Every child, including children with disabilities, needs to learn social behaviours of mutual respect and respect for those around them through interactions with others who are different at school.

The positive social behavior of children with disabilities is influenced by the process of social interaction that takes place in the environment. According to Gillin and Gillin (in Soekanto, 2014) social interaction is a dynamic social relationship concerning relationships between individuals, between groups and between individuals and groups. Social interaction is a reciprocal relationship of mutual influence between individuals, social groups, and society (Wahyuningsih, 2011) According to Blumer (in Wirawan, 2012) social interaction is a relationship that occurs naturally between humans in society and the relationship between society and individuals that develops through gestures (voice, physical movements, body expressions) created and takes place consciously. So based on expert opinion, it is concluded that social interaction is a dynamic social relationship that occurs naturally between individuals and individuals with groups (society), developing through voices, expressions, and gestures. Social interaction in the educational environment within the scope of school exposes children to various rules, discipline, and respect for others. According to Robinson (in Karsidi, 2005) The interaction that takes place in the classroom within the school environment is an educational process.

School life provides new experiences in the social interaction of children of different ethnicity, religion, gender and personality. Children's learning and playing activities at school are a process of social interaction. The requirements for social interaction according to Soekanto (2014) are social

contact and communication. Social contact takes place in three forms, namely between individuals, between individuals and groups, and between groups. Meanwhile, communication is a meaning that a person gives to another person's behavior in the form of feelings that he wants to convey to that person.

Social contact and communication at school are in the form of conversation, information delivery, playing together, and group work. Forms of social interaction according to Gillin and Gillin (in Soekanto, 2014) are cooperation, competition, accommodation, and conflict. The school environment teaches children to interact with others through peer relationships. Students will learn new skills through actions imitated from peers such as cooperating in groups, honest behavior, and discipline. In addition, students can relate directly to people who are different from themselves, learn to appreciate and respect others. A pattern is an orderly arrangement of objects or events in time or space (Buckley, 2010). It is concluded that the meaning of social interaction pattern is a design that creates dynamic social relationships between individuals and individuals with accepted groups at the same time. Students' social interaction patterns that take place well in inclusive schools will have a positive influence on academic and social abilities. It is necessary to instill arguments and attitudes that diversity is a resource rather than a problem, eliminating discrimination and exclusion that corner children with special needs from their environment (Ilahi, 2013). So that good acceptance from normal children can foster self-confidence in children with disabilities. However, in reality, children with disabilities in inclusive schools still experience several obstacles in interacting with all subjects in the school, namely normal children, teachers, and principals. Like the research conducted by Sri Utami Ayuningsih Mariani Soedarsono entitled *Inclusive Education and its Relationship with the Development of Communication and Social Interaction in Autistic Children* (research in several elementary schools in Jakarta) the implementation of inclusive education in several elementary schools in Jakarta shows that children with autistic categories in inclusive education have not shown real development in communication and social interaction because there is no openness in establishing good communication.

The reason is that inclusive education in the schools studied does not have all the components of the criteria for organizing inclusive education. It is proven that the majority of regular schools accept autistic children without being based on knowledge of children's conditions, teacher training, child data collection, and no preparation before accepting children. Then another study conducted by Indar Mery Handayani, entitled *Social Interaction of Children with Special Needs at SDN 016 / 016 Inclusive Samarinda (Case Study of Children with Autism)* showed that the implementation of inclusive education did not run effectively, because children with autistic categories in their interaction abilities did not improve, there was no good acceptance from the school, the school atmosphere was not conducive, and teaching and learning facilities and play facilities were not in accordance with the needs of autistic children, causing an increase in the inability of these children to interact and develop (Handayani, 2013).

Another study conducted by Isroatul Marya Ulfah (Ulfah, 2015), entitled *Social Interaction of Autistic Learners in Inclusive Schools* shows that autistic children with disabilities do not have good concentration and meaningful eye contact with people around them, forming social interactions that are still minimal due to limited infrastructure for autistic students and the handling by teachers is not optimal, so that social interactions that should begin to develop are still hampered and cause complex problems for autistic students. The results of the above findings are in line with the problems of social interaction that still occur in several schools that provide inclusive education in Indonesia. One of them is Mattoanging 1 State Elementary School in Makassar City.

As one of the public primary schools with inclusion status in Makassar City, the implementation of inclusion is still faced with various obstacles. Basically, building harmonious interactions is not an easy thing, especially when it involves children with special needs. Most people think that children with disabilities are a minority, not many people can accept their existence. Some of the obstacles include: 1) On the family side, parents with a variety of professions and social statuses still consider

mixing students in regular classes not the right solution because it is feared that it will have a negative impact on the mentality of their children who are classified as normal students if they are put together with children with disabilities so that many parents limit their children's socialization at school. 2) In terms of students, diverse family backgrounds with upper middle class social classes (affluent) form a high egocentric / individualistic nature in normal students so that they always want to look the best among other students while students with disabilities show insecurity, 3) In terms of social interaction: Normal students form certain groups according to their level of intelligence, clever students have many friends, communicate and mingle with friends they like; Students with disabilities withdraw from the social environment, form their own groups and some are often alone because they feel less confident; Teachers with disabilities and normal children interact naturally and do not differentiate by providing the same services, the specificity of services is only carried out by the Special Assistance Teacher. However, the attitudes shown by the students were different: the children with disabilities were more passive, closed and lacked confidence in their abilities, while the normal children were more active, open and confident; the principal treated the children with disabilities and normal children the same, but the children with disabilities showed a closed attitude and were less open about the problems they faced. 4) In terms of teaching staff, a Special Assistance Teacher (GPK) was brought in once a month to help assist children with special needs, but this did not last long and has been discontinued, because the special services actually made the children with disabilities feel discouraged, in fact they did not want to be called children with disabilities and treated specially like children in special schools; Classroom teachers still have difficulty motivating children with special needs. 5) The surrounding community is unfamiliar with the term inclusion, thinking that inclusion is the same as an extraordinary primary school. 6) In terms of curriculum, children with special needs still use the same curriculum as normal students, which has not been adapted to their special needs.

SD Negeri Mattoanging 1 is one of the public schools that organizes Inclusion in Makassar City. Students at SD Negeri Mattoangin 1, with a total of 9 inclusion students. Classes at SD Negeri Mattoangin 1 are organized in parallel, namely classes A and B. The classrooms used for teaching total 12 rooms. As one of the leading public primary schools with inclusion status in Makassar City, there are a variety of students studying at this institution. Based on the diversity of students, the types of children with special needs who attend this institution also vary. Some types of children with disabilities at Mattoanging 1 State Primary School are children with learning disabilities and hyperactive children. During learning activities, children with learning disabilities are placed in regular classes with other normal children and receive the same subject matter. However, in giving questions between normal children and children with disabilities there are different grades, namely with different levels of difficulty according to their ability levels. Questions with different grades aim to ensure that all students, both children with disabilities and normal children, can achieve the same KKM (Minimum Completeness Criteria).

The poor social contact and communication of students in building social interactions in this inclusive school environment, attracts researchers to find appropriate social interaction patterns to be applied in . Therefore the researcher took the title *Patterns of Social Interaction in Grade 5 Inclusive Education at UPT SPF SDN Mattoanging 1*.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1. *Patterns of Social Interaction: A Study on Circular Interaction Dynamics in Group Settings*

Social interaction patterns refer to the structured ways in which social relationships are organized and maintained. The concept of a pattern implies a design or systematic way of working (Compilation Team, 1991; Buckley, 2010). Social interaction is fundamental to social life, serving as the basis for social processes. Soekanto (2014) defines social interaction as a dynamic social relationship involving individuals, groups, and the interactions between them. Veeger (in Wirawan, 2012) sees social

interaction as an automatic response to stimuli, while Blumer (in Wirawan, 2012) emphasizes the role of gestures and conscious communication in these interactions. Social interaction patterns can be categorized into associative patterns, which promote cooperation and social order, and dissociative patterns, which lead to competition and conflict, hindering social order. There are three main forms of interaction patterns: (1) Individual to Individual, where social distance, sympathy, antipathy, and interaction frequency play key roles; (2) Individual to Group, which includes circular, X, Y, and straight-line patterns, each reflecting different levels of freedom and control in interactions; and (3) Group to Group, where interactions are influenced by factors such as ethnicity, religion, and social structures. This study focuses on the circular pattern, which allows for democratic and open communication within groups, both vertically and horizontally.

## 2.2. Definition of Social Interaction

Social interaction is defined as the reciprocal relationship between individuals and groups, where behaviors influence, change, or improve one another. It is a fundamental aspect of human life, characterized by dynamic social relationships. Poor social interaction among students often results in relationships filled with hatred and a lack of cooperation.

## 2.3. Factors Affecting Social Interaction

There are several factors that influence social interaction, including imitation, suggestion, identification, and sympathy. These factors shape how individuals interact and influence one another within social contexts. Imitation plays a crucial role in social life as individuals learn behaviors, languages, and social norms by observing and mimicking others. While imitation can encourage conformity to societal rules, it can also lead to the adoption of deviant behaviors. Suggestion, both self-induced (autosuggestion) and from others (hetero-suggestion), significantly influences individuals' thoughts and actions. Unlike imitation, suggestion involves the internal acceptance of ideas or attitudes from oneself or others. Identification refers to the psychological urge to become similar to others, both outwardly and inwardly. This process is unconscious and often irrational, influencing individuals to adopt norms, ideals, and behaviors from those they identify with. Sympathy involves an emotional attraction towards others, leading to a desire for understanding and cooperation. Unlike identification, sympathy fosters mutual understanding and cooperative relationships.

Social interaction occurs under specific conditions, primarily social contact and communication. Social contact can be positive or negative, primary or secondary, and is essential for meaningful social interactions. Social contact, whether direct or indirect, is a prerequisite for social interaction. It involves reciprocal actions and responses, which can lead to cooperation or conflict depending on the nature of the contact. Effective conversation requires politeness, focus, and feedback. It is essential for maintaining fluid interactions and building connections between individuals. Eye contact conveys attention and interest, playing a vital role in communication. It can express a range of emotions and influence the dynamics of interaction. Mutual understanding involves accepting others as they are, which fosters healthy interpersonal relationships. It requires respect, non-judgment, and unconditional acceptance. Cooperation arises from the recognition of common interests and the willingness to work together. Effective cooperation requires communication and the ability to manage shared goals.

Communication, both verbal and non-verbal, is essential for expressing and understanding thoughts and feelings. Effective communication is characterized by openness, empathy, support, positive attitudes, and similarity between the communicator and communicant. Openness in communication involves a willingness to share and respond honestly, which enhances the effectiveness and meaningfulness of interpersonal interactions. Empathy, or the ability to understand and share the

feelings of others, is crucial for building strong interpersonal relationships and fostering mutual understanding. Supportive communication encourages participation and helps maintain openness and empathy in interactions. A supportive atmosphere is vital for sustaining effective interpersonal communication. Lastly, a positive attitude in communication promotes a positive response from others and creates a pleasant interaction environment, essential for successful interpersonal communication.

### 3. RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 Makassar from April to June 2024, with initial observations in January 2024. This research used a descriptive qualitative approach to interpret data related to facts, circumstances and social phenomena that occurred during the research. The research subjects included the principal and two grade V teachers, who provided information about students' social interactions in inclusive education. The research instruments were questionnaires and observation sheets to measure students' social interactions, with data collection techniques including observation, semi-structured interviews and documentation. Data validity was tested by triangulating sources, techniques and time to ensure the credibility of the results. Data analysis was conducted inductively using the Miles and Huberman interactive model, including data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. All of these steps were designed to explore patterns of social interaction in inclusive education in class V of UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1, which is expected to provide a clear and detailed picture of the dynamics of interaction in this environment.

### 4. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

#### 4.1. Research Result

The following is the data obtained and analyzed from interviews regarding the interaction of children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 in accordance with the formulation of the problem as follows:

- a. Problem 1: What are the social interactions of children with special needs with fellow children with special needs, normal students, and teachers in inclusive education in Class 5 UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1?

- *Social Interaction with Children with Special Needs*

Social interaction is a reciprocal process between individuals with individuals, individuals with groups, and groups with groups. Individual abilities greatly affect the process of social interaction. The ability to communicate varies, resulting in a variety of social interactions as well. One of the things that affects these kinds of social interactions is children with special needs. Where children with special needs will have characteristics and patterns of social interaction that are slightly different from most. The following are the results of findings regarding social interactions among children with special needs that occur at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1. The respondent named Mrs. FTR who is one of the class teachers in class 5 was interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30 Wita as follows:

“It's getting better. Because they can talk together, study together, play together. But sometimes they can't understand each other's conditions. Like one likes to tease the other, so sometimes they get cranky. But that doesn't happen often anymore because now they can be directed and instructed”.

In the quote above, Mrs. FTR explained that the social interaction of children with special needs with children with special needs has been said to be better. In the inclusion class in particular, the average child can chat together, can learn together, and play together with other children with special needs. But indeed some children sometimes they still cannot understand the conditions of their friends with special needs too, but this can be minimized because children with special needs on average are more able to be directed, given understanding, and instructions from class teachers and other teachers.

The respondent named Mr. SPR, who is one of the teachers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1, who was interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 09.30 Wita, explained as follows:

“For interactions with children with special needs, on average, they are good, they can talk to each other, play together, and study together. But back to the child, sometimes there are still those who want to be alone, some are looking for their friends if they are not there, some can already invite to play, some can already invite to chat, some are uncomfortable if they are approached”.

In this quote, Mr. SPR explained that the interaction between children with special needs and children with special needs is good on average. This can be seen from their interactions between individuals with individuals, individuals with groups, and groups with groups such as being able to communicate, play together and learn with other students. But it goes back to each child, sometimes there are some children who prefer to be alone, some depend on their friends, can start interactions and some are uncomfortable to interact with. From the respondents' descriptions above, it can be found that social interaction among children with special needs is generally good, but there are still a small number who cannot interact well. Previous disagreements between children with special needs and their peers included: (1) they did not want to communicate with other children with disabilities, (2) they did not want to play together, (3) they found it difficult to understand or adjust to their fellow children with disabilities.

- *Social Interaction of Children with Special Needs with Teachers*

Social interaction can occur anytime and anywhere which is influenced by several backgrounds. As in the school environment, the teaching and learning process at school cannot be separated from social interaction. Social interaction is one of the important things in helping the success of learning at school, both between teachers and students, students and students, as well as with other school members.

The following are the results of findings regarding the social interactions of children with special needs with teachers that occur at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 where the respondents were interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30 Wita. The respondent named Mrs. FTR who is one of the class teachers in class 5 as follows:

“It has been running well. Maybe at first it was difficult because the students were still adapting to the teacher, the teacher also had to understand the condition of each child first. In the beginning, maybe the interaction was like the teacher asking questions and answers to see the child's response, but now it is more than that, such as being able to be given instructions, being able to be calmer when being asserted, understanding more when advised and being able to follow the learning well”.

In the quote above, Mrs. FTR explained that the social interaction of children with special needs has gone well. The development of interaction has also been seen, maybe if at the beginning it was just a question and answer to adapt while seeing the child's condition and habits as well as the child to get to know and understand the teacher better. If the interaction of children with special needs is

now better, they can be given instructions during the learning process and outside of learning, they are calmer in managing their emotions, they know when the teacher is firm when they make a mistake or something that is not good, they are more understanding if they are advised, and they can follow the learning well. Then added by a respondent named Mr. SPR, who is one of the teachers of children with special needs, expressed the following:

“If I look at class 5 itself, the interaction between the child and the teacher is good because the child is always invited to talk to the teacher, for example, if the child is quiet, asked, motivated to learn, invited to play. So the interaction between the teacher and the children with disabilities itself has gone well. For example, if he is confused about the subject matter or something, he will ask the accompanying teacher first and then be directed to learn to ask the class teacher like that”.

In the following quote, Mr. SPR said that the interaction of children with special needs between teachers and students is good. This cannot be separated from the teacher's efforts to provoke children or direct children, such as children who are quiet then the teacher tries to ask questions to the child, all children with special needs and non-special needs are motivated to learn, invited to play. Teachers and class teachers also work together to direct children, such as children who only dare to ask homeroom teachers then homeroom teachers try to direct children so that they can try to dare to ask all teachers for example.

Based on the respondents' descriptions above, it was generally found that the social interactions of children with special needs with teachers had gone well. Social interaction when adapting between teachers and children with special needs is only limited to asking and answering questions while recognizing and understanding each other's characters. If now it is more than that, because the interaction is even better between children with special needs and their teachers. Although some children still cannot interact well with their teachers.

- *Social Interaction of Children with Special Needs with Normal Children*

In encouraging good social interaction in the inclusion classroom, it requires various kinds of support from several parties. Be it from teachers, normal children or children with special needs themselves. The following are the results of findings regarding the social interactions of children with special needs with normal children that occur at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 where the respondents were interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30 Wita. The respondent named Mrs. FTR who is one of the class teachers in class 5 as follows:

“It's getting better. They can communicate well, learn together, play together. Sometimes non abk children like to help in the learning process, some whisper, some say until they understand, some encourage them during games for example. Then we also sometimes give instructions to non-abk children to better understand the conditions of abk friends”.

The quote says that the interaction between children with special needs and normal children is better than before. In the learning process, normal children often help children with special needs, both physically and verbally. This is because the teacher educates all children to understand the conditions of each student in the class, including normal children to children with special needs. Then the respondent named Mr. SPR, who is one of the teachers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1, explained as follows:

“On average, the interaction has gone well, but again it goes back to the children themselves. Moreover, children with disabilities sometimes have habits that can make other

normal children uncomfortable, for example, but if they understand, normal children are usually more like understanding”.

The quote above explains that the interaction of children with special needs with normal children has gone well, but it goes back to the nature of the child himself. But sometimes children with special needs have tantrums or attitudes that have become accustomed to doing, which can disturb other normal children. However, on average, normal children already understand the habits of children with special needs so they can understand.

Based on the respondents' descriptions above, it was generally found that the interaction between children with special needs and normal children has gone quite well. Between children with special needs and normal children, they can communicate well, help each other, help each other and so on. However, sometimes some children with special needs have tantrums which are quite disturbing for children with special needs, but on average normal children understand this. The development of social interaction of children with special needs at school where the respondent was interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30 Wita.

After knowing the social interactions of children with special needs, researchers also asked about the development of social interactions of children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 before and after studying at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1, The answer from Mrs. FTR stated:

“At first we definitely need to know what the child is like, at first there are those who like us to talk or be asked but there are also those who don't like to be asked. Now after we have been able to build communication with them, then the child knows that the teacher is good to them, usually they will listen if given instructions, even once there was a child who was having a tantrum maybe because the mood from home was bad so at school he was whining. But because he knows the teacher respects him, the teacher won't get angry. In the beginning, it often happened like that because they were still adapting, but now the development is calmer, more directed, and more able to be given instructions”.

From the above quote, it can be concluded that it is important to understand the individual characteristics of each child on a personal level. This process involves establishing a good communication relationship with the children, where some are more open to talking and some are not. When children feel that they are treated well by teachers and given understanding, they are more likely to listen to instructions. In certain experiences, there are children who may experience tantrums at school, which may be triggered by a bad atmosphere at home. However, because they feel valued by the teacher and receive an understanding response, they can overcome this difficult phase. This is part of the early adaptation process at school, where with the right timing and guidance, children's development can become more stable, purposeful and they are better able to follow instructions well. Not only Mrs. FTR who gave the answer but Mr. SPR also provided information that :

“Again, it's different. For example, in class 5 there is a very chatty one, whoever he meets is invited to chat, asked repeatedly, even asked personal things, but because we train children to be able to put themselves in situations and fortunately this child can communicate in 2 directions. So we direct this child to be able to control the questions asked, the timing, so it's not just randomly meeting people and asking questions so we also see whether the person is comfortable or not, so each child is indeed directed to be braked so that his chatting is more organized, some are actually told to talk or chat with teachers or other children”.

From the interview, the conclusion was that each child has a different character and way of communicating. For example, some children are very talkative and like to ask questions, even about

personal matters. However, it is important to train children to be able to position themselves well in various communication situations. Children need to be taught to control the type of questions they ask, the right time to ask, and also ensure that the other person is comfortable. Thus, they can learn to communicate effectively and build good relationships with others. Based on the respondents' descriptions above, it was generally found that

“There is a development in the social interaction of children with special needs at school, from the beginning they could not regulate their emotions now they can control themselves and initially they could not communicate 2-way now they can communicate 2-way. All children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 have been able to carry out associative social interactions? If there are those who still have dissociative social interactions like what?. respondents were interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30 Wita”.

Every child with special needs has their own limitations, but this does not become an obstacle to keep interacting with each other. In the inclusion class, on average, children with special needs can interact well with other children with special needs. In the process of interaction, it cannot be separated from the guidance and education of teachers and the support of normal friends and other children with special needs. The forms of interaction between children with special needs and children with special needs are very diverse, there are associative and dissociative processes. The response of FTR's mother stated:

“In my opinion, almost all of them have been able to interact with other people, especially children with special needs who are already in the inclusion class. The interaction also varies, on average it is good. Mostly if they are having a tantrum, maybe the interaction is disrupted”.

The quote above states that most children with special needs who are in inclusive classes are able to interact with others, although there are variations in the types of interactions that occur. In general, the interaction is considered good, but sometimes it can be disrupted when the child has a tantrum. Then added by Mr. SPR stated:

“Yes, on average, they have interacted associatively such as chatting together, learning together, playing together, cooperating, supporting each other, helping each other, whether it's with the teacher or with other children without disabilities and children with disabilities. However, there are still dissociative interactions because children with disabilities have mood swings, sometimes they can't be controlled, so sometimes they still throw things, shout”.

The quote above states that in general, children with special needs are able to interact associatively well in the inclusive classroom. They can talk, learn and play together with non-disabled children and support and help each other. However, there were challenges in the form of mood swings that sometimes led to dissociative behaviors such as throwing things or shouting, which disrupted their overall interaction. Based on the respondents' descriptions above, it was generally found that children with special needs who are in inclusive classes have demonstrated the ability to interact positively with the surrounding environment, including with their teachers and classmates, both those with special needs and those without. They are able to talk, learn, play, cooperate, support and help each other.

However, there are emerging challenges related to emotional control, such as mood swings that sometimes lead to dissociative behaviors such as throwing things or screaming. Nonetheless, in general, their interactions were rated as positive and varied, despite being disrupted in tantrum

situations. How teachers improve the social interaction of children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 where the respondent was interviewed on Friday 7-6-2024 at 08.30.

Some children with special needs have difficulty communicating with others, usually the teacher makes efforts such as bringing one of the other children closer to the child so that it can cause his social spirit. Meanwhile, in dealing with children who are too active, they are usually noticed first and then directed, so that children can understand what they can do and where they can go. That way the child will understand more easily, be directed and have better social interactions. The following respondent named Mrs. FTR stated:

“If there is one who is still silent, we ask questions and then one of the other friends is approached to him so that he will be provoked by his social spirit, so that he can gradually blend in with other friends as well. For those who run around, we first look at the child, then direct them to where they can go and where they can't”.

Furthermore, Mr. SPR also stated that:

I prefer children who are full of challenges. So we improve the child while learning. First we have to know where they feel valued. Don't equate all children with what the teacher wants, because all children have different strengths. Once we can direct the child's emotions, the interaction will also be better. The teacher will feel happy when the child is much better than before.

From the descriptions and explanations of the respondents above, it can be concluded that a flexible and observation-based approach to each child is important. By paying attention to individual needs and using appropriate strategies, teachers can assist children in developing their social and emotional skills, thereby creating a supportive learning environment for all students. Inclusion class program, vision and curriculum are very commensurate in improving the social interaction of children with special needs. In addition, it is assisted by the cooperation between the school. From several informant interviews, it can be concluded that the treatments carried out to improve social interaction for children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 include:

Interactive display is one of the learning media that contains learning that can be taken in the school environment. The awareness that nature and the surrounding environment as a source of knowledge needs to be instilled from an early age. The school situation is comfortable, friendly to children with special needs and the teachers can provide good teaching so that the interaction of children with special needs can be better and more directed than before. Always provide regular training for all teachers such as training on how to assist children with special needs, good classroom management for children with special needs and others. This can help facilitate the learning process. Children with special needs who join regular classes or UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 inclusion classes are given a maximum limit in one class of only 4 children with special needs. This is enforced so that the learning process in the classroom is more conducive and smooth.

All children with special needs are free to do activities at school. There are several times that are designed so that children with special needs mingle with their friends without always being accompanied. UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 considers that if there are many activities, there will be more interactions. UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 applies the slogan, namely 3A, namely Safe self, Safe friends, Safe environment. By instilling this slogan, it will encourage children with special needs or normal children to maintain their attitude so that they are safe, their friends are safe and their environment is safe. If there is poor interaction, the teacher plays a role in providing various kinds of understanding to children with special needs and normal children. Understanding is given when the child's emotional condition is stable, the teacher invites normal children and children with special needs for two-way communication first. After that the teacher provides understanding such as through

pictures that make it easier for children to understand what can be done and what not to do. If there are children with special needs who have difficulty communicating with others, the teacher usually makes efforts such as bringing one of the other children closer to the child so that it can cause his social spirit.

Meanwhile, in dealing with children who are too active, they are usually noticed first and then directed, so that children can understand what they can do and where they can go. That way the child will understand more easily, be directed and have better social interaction. The UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 also requested that all parents work together. At school, children are given several lessons to improve their interaction, at home parents make efforts such as reminding the child's memory of what has been done at school, asking about the people in the photo and asking what activities are done at school. These efforts will help children recognize, remember, understand and generate their social spirit to interact better with everyone. After knowing the social interactions of children with special needs with fellow children with special needs, normal students, and teachers in inclusive education in Class 5 UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1. Furthermore, the researcher discusses how the teacher's efforts to overcome the problems of social interactions of children with special needs and normal students in inclusive education in Class 5 UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1.

- b. Problem 2: Teachers' efforts in overcoming the problems of social interaction between children with special needs and normal students in inclusive education in Class 5 UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1.

Are there any obstacles that you face when interacting with students with special needs?. The interview was conducted on Friday 7-6-2024 at 09.00 Wita. The problems faced by students with special needs to interact with teachers are of course certain, what else as we know children with special needs are less able to control themselves, in accordance with Mrs. FTR's statement which states:

“What is it about? Controlling student behavior (lack of self-control), understanding children's problems one by one, especially those with special needs”.

The quote explains that there are problems faced by students with special needs to interact with teachers. One of them is that children with special needs are less able to control themselves. Then added by Mr. SPR stating:

“Yes, about lessons, the first is usually math, multiplication and division material, children often face difficulties in adding and subtracting. Then about reading and writing, often the child reads unclearly and misses some words, in writing the child often misses some words. letters in writing words and sentences”.

Based on the respondents' descriptions above, it was generally found that there are obstacles that teachers face when interacting with students,

What are the solutions from the teachers to overcome these obstacles?. The interview was conducted on Friday, 7-6-2024 at 09.00 Wita. What is the solution from the teacher to overcome the obstacles that exist as stated by the teacher above, Mrs. FTR stated:

“I try to slowly approach the child, first I ask about what problems there are in him, then enter the scope of his family (parents) about how his parents are at home, whether there are problems at home”.

Mr. SPR also gave a response about the solution to overcome the existing obstacles, namely he stated that:

“I try to accompany the child, then I give understanding to other children in dealing with students with special needs to be able to accept each other and not be condescending. For children with special needs, I give them motivation (encouragement) so that his confidence comes up”.

From some of the results of the informant interviews, it can be concluded that teachers have their own ways to overcome the problems faced by students with special needs to interact with teachers, there are teachers who take an approach, then ask about the problems that exist in the child, then there are teachers who provide assistance then provide understanding to other children in dealing with their friends with special needs.

#### 4.2. Discussion

Social interaction is one of the important things that support the achievement of learning objectives in schools. Therefore, a school that is adequate in terms of facilities and teaching is needed. No exception to schools that implement inclusive classes where there are children with special needs who are combined in one class with normal children. A comfortable school atmosphere, adequate facilities and supportive school members will help achieve good social interactions at school. The research was conducted by researchers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1. UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 is one of the schools that implements inclusive classes with a vision and curriculum that is friendly to children with special needs.

Regarding this discussion, it refers to previous research but the place of research is different. The previous research was conducted at Sekolah Alam Bengkulu Mahira, but the discussion is still about social interactions of children with special needs in natural schools. The findings in the previous study, namely the social interactions of students with Down syndrome at Sekolah Alam Bengkulu Mahira, showed that there were 1 (one) student with Down syndrome who had not been able to carry out social interactions well, while 1 (one) other student with Down syndrome had been able to carry out social interactions well. The social interaction of students with autism at Sekolah Alam Bengkulu Mahira shows that there are 2 (two) students with autism who have not been able to carry out social interactions well, while the other 4 (four) students with autism have been able to carry out social interactions well. The social interactions of students with autism at Sekolah Alam Bengkulu Mahira show that 3 (three) students with autism have not been able to carry out social interactions well, except with normal students, teachers and the principal.

These findings are different from what researchers found in research on the social interactions of children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1. This happened because the problem boundaries in previous studies were 3, namely children with special needs with Down syndrome, with the characteristics of having large feet and hands, round faces and narrow eyes, children with autistic special needs, with the characteristics of always being alone sitting in the corner of the room, and children with special needs with tunagrahita, with the characteristics of having eyes that are always bulging (rarely blinking) and speaking in a loud voice (like someone who is shouting). Meanwhile, research at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 averages children with special needs with developmental delays, lack of hearing and delays in understanding. With differences in the subjects and objects of previous research, the results found will also be different.

The research conducted by researchers regarding the social interaction of children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 uses the theory of social interaction from Gillin and Gillin. According to Gillin and Gillin, social interaction is a dynamic social relationship that involves relationships between individuals, between human groups, and between individuals and human groups. The forms of social interaction according to Gillin and Gillin in Syahril 2020 are associative processes, namely a social process that indicates an approach or unification. Associative forms include

cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation. A dissociative process is a social process that indicates a movement towards division. Dissociative forms include competition and opposition.

*a. Social Interaction with Children with Special Needs*

Every child with special needs has their own limitations, but this does not become an obstacle to keep interacting with each other. In the inclusion class, on average, children with special needs can interact well with other children with special needs. In the process of interaction, it cannot be separated from the guidance and education of teachers and the support of normal friends and other children with special needs. The forms of interaction between children with special needs and children with special needs are very diverse, there are associative and dissociative processes.

The associative processes of social interaction among children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 show effective cooperation. These children are able to communicate, learn, and play together, facilitating the learning process at school. They are open with each other, demonstrate a willingness to engage in activities together, and work collaboratively, which promotes positive social interaction within the learning environment. Initially, during the adaptation period, children with special needs might not know each other well, sometimes exhibiting tantrums, and their communication with peers may be poor. However, various school programs designed to encourage interaction between these children have improved their social engagement. Despite their individual limitations, when children with special needs are brought together in activities, such as routine motor activities, they can work together effectively, understand each other, and learn collaboratively even if they are from different classes.

On the other hand, the dissociative processes in social interactions among these children at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 reveal that there is no competitive interaction among them. There is no competition, as children with special needs are always accompanied by a support teacher who addresses any inappropriate behavior promptly. However, there are instances of conflict, such as tantrums involving teasing, mocking, or spitting, which can disturb other children and lead to tension. Children who feel disturbed might respond with tantrums, silence, reluctance to communicate, or retreating to quieter areas. In conclusion, social interactions between children with special needs at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 are generally positive, characterized by associative interactions such as cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation. Although competition is absent, some children still experience dissociative social interactions marked by opposition.

*b. Social Interaction of Children with Special Needs with Teachers*

Social interaction between children with special needs and teachers goes well. In teaching and learning activities it goes as usual, teachers teach as they should and children with special needs learn as they should as students. Teachers always try to equalize their interactions with all normal children and those with special needs according to their conditions and needs. Then in communicating between teachers and children with special needs it runs smoothly and there are no obstacles because the teacher already understands the conditions and how to communicate with children with special needs. Some children with special needs also use tools such as hearing aids to make it easier for them to communicate. Teachers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 view all children as equal, as having the right to be free, to express what they want, and to interact properly and purposefully. The associative process of social interaction between children with special needs and their teachers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 is characterized by effective cooperation. Teachers actively engage with children with special needs by asking questions, providing explanations about subjects or appropriate behaviors, and guiding their activities to be more focused. They work to enhance the children's skills, including their ability to interact. Children with special needs are generally able to ask and answer questions, and they respond well to advice or directions from their teachers.

Initially, the interaction between children with special needs and their teachers was limited, as teachers were still learning about each child's unique limitations and characteristics. Teachers would

ask questions and observe responses to understand each child's needs better, while children with special needs were unfamiliar with the rules and expectations set by the teachers. Over time, as both teachers and students adapted to each other's nature and needs, the interaction improved significantly. Teachers now have a better grasp of each child's condition, and children with special needs have become more receptive to directions and instructions, understanding the consequences of inappropriate behavior. In an inclusive classroom, teachers know that they will be working with children with special needs and typically developing children. They tailor their teaching methods to accommodate the specific needs of children with special needs, sometimes differentiating the material or questions, such as in math subjects. Children with special needs are able to follow the learning process effectively, responding well to instruction and guidance from their teachers, which fosters positive social interaction.

Regarding the dissociative process, no competitive interaction exists between children with special needs and their teachers. Teachers strive to provide the best education and support for their students, guiding and educating them effectively. Children with special needs generally show respect and affection towards their teachers, even during tantrums. There are no significant conflicts between children with special needs and their teachers, as children typically understand that their teachers are supportive and kind, leading them to avoid directing negative behaviors towards them. In summary, social interactions between children with special needs and teachers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 are positive and constructive. Associative interactions, including cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation, are evident, while dissociative interactions show no signs of competition or conflict.

*c. Social Interaction of Children with Special Needs with Normal Children*

In the inclusive classroom, there is social interaction between children with special needs and normal children. This social interaction is needed to help the learning process in the classroom. Children with special needs and normal children work together, respect each other, respect each other so that good social interactions between the two will be achieved. There are many advantages to inclusive classes, not only for children with special needs but also for normal children themselves. Children with special needs learn and will get used to all friends without feeling alienated. Likewise with normal children, they will learn to appreciate the differences or limitations that some friends have, especially children with special needs.

The associative process of social interaction between children with special needs and their typically developing peers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 shows a positive trend. Cooperation is evident as children with special needs, despite their limitations, are able to learn alongside their typically developing peers. Typically developing children, in turn, understand the conditions of their peers with special needs and often offer help and support during the learning process. This mutual understanding contributes to improved social interactions between the two groups. In terms of accommodation, both children with special needs and their typically developing peers have adapted well to each other. Initially, differences in thinking, habits, or lifestyle might have been noticeable, but now children with special needs are more calm and integrated, while typically developing children are more understanding of the differences and limitations of their peers with special needs. As a result, conflicts between the two groups have become rare, with typically developing children showing increased tolerance towards any disturbances caused by their peers with special needs.

Assimilation is also progressing well, with children in inclusive classrooms understanding and respecting each other's differences. Children with special needs have come to accept the presence of typically developing peers, and vice versa. This mutual respect fosters a cooperative environment where students work well together and support one another. Regarding the dissociative process, there is no significant competition between children with special needs and their typically developing peers. Typically developing children recognize that their peers with special needs are friends who deserve support and appreciation, which prevents competitive dynamics from arising. Conflicts are

infrequent, and when they do occur, typically developing children are generally more understanding and capable of managing any disruptive behaviors from their peers with special needs.

The findings align with research conducted by Windiyanto (2020) on the social interaction of children with special needs in inclusive education. Windiyanto's study highlights that the inclusion process involves IQ testing, medical assessments, and careful planning to accommodate students with special needs. It also emphasizes the importance of associative social interactions in teaching, involving cooperation and accommodation. While most students with special needs, including those with autism, intellectual disabilities, and physical disabilities, interact socially well, some still face challenges. Barriers such as limited parental understanding, inadequate teacher interaction, and difficulties in communication for some students persist. Overall, social interactions between children with special needs and their typically developing peers at UPT SPF SDN Mattoangin 1 are generally positive, with effective associative processes of cooperation, accommodation, and assimilation, and minimal instances of dissociative interactions such as competition and conflict.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The process of social interaction between fellow children with special needs, children with special needs and teachers and children with special needs with normal children has gone well. Although there are still social interactions that are not good enough. There are associative social interactions among children with special needs such as cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. Forms of cooperation among children with special needs such as communicating with each other, learning together, playing together so as to facilitate the learning process at school. There are associative social interactions of cooperation, accommodation and assimilation. Forms of cooperative social interactions such as teachers making efforts to approach children with special needs such as asking questions, giving understanding about subject matter or good attitudes, directing so that all activities carried out by children with special needs are more directed, upgrading children's skills including the interaction itself. Through the cultivation of three social values namely tolerance, cooperation and respect which are linked to three social theories namely symbolic interactionism theory emphasizing language, social exchange theory emphasizing social behavior, and social learning theory emphasizing social learning in the classroom.

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