GRAND TOKEN HELPS LANGUAGE TEACHERS TO DEAL WITH LEARNERS' BEHAVIOURAL PROBLEMS

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Abstract

In a learning difficulties class of a Special Needs Programme, a teacher's role is as a teaching staff and an administrator. Teachers are frequently faced with learners' varied antics and behavioural problems. Amongst the common behavioural problems in any Special Needs Class are aggressive behaviours, passiveness, negative social behaviours and emotional problems. Thus Grand Token (GT) is one technique that has been adopted in managing the varied Special Needs learners' behavioural problems in this research. The hypothesis is that when Special Needs children are given the trust and responsibility to manage their own behaviours in a form of a contract which they have to adhere to, they will be able to better manage and control their own behaviours. This action research is based on Kemmis and McTaggart Model(1988). 4 Special Needs learners with learning difficulties are the subject of this research. Qualitative data is gathered through a triangulation method which consists of interview sessions with Special Needs Education teacher involved, record of learners attendance and observation of learners ability to complete tasks given in language classes.. Before the learning sessions for the research start, a contract chart which is agreed upon by the learners is first prepared. Based on the qualitative data gained, it has been found that GT is an effective technique to help language teachers deal with learners' behavioural problems. By using the agreed contract technique, a score of 90% is produced. The results show an increase in school attendance frequency, being active during language classes and an increase in learners' ability to complete language tasks during lessons.

Thus it is hoped that this GT technique which comes with a guide book, an A4 sized GT contract chart and a CD of its implementation may assist not only Special Needs teachers of Learning difficulties, but also mainstream teachers.

Keyword: Grand Token, Grand Token Contract, Behavioral Problem

Introduction
Special Needs Learners derived from various categories, that is, Down Syndrome, autism, ADHD and specific learning disabilities (Norshidah Mohamad Salleh, Aliza Alias dan Zalizan Mohamad Jelas 2009). In Malaysia these learners will be in the Special Needs Education Programme (KPM 2005).

According to Gagne theory (1985) the learning process is to focus, whereby, learners need to focus to the teaching that takes place and able to relate the new to the previous teaching and learning experience. The different background of the students in the programme actually gives rise to conflict in the classroom. In most cases, the major problem of special needs children are behaviour problems, such as, lacking in focus, disturbing friends, disobey teacher's orders and poor attendance which actually distract their attention from teacher's teaching (Mercer 1992).

Special Needs teachers are hoped to be able to help the special needs learners so that they are able to progress in accordance to the National Education Philosophy. Therefore, it is hoped that the teacher's training given are able to fulfill this objective as well as the understanding of various learning style.

Reflection on past teaching and learning
The researcher discovered that the major problem faced by teachers in the special needs classrooms is to monitor their learners' behaviour. These learners tend to disobey orders, disturb their friends, shouts, too passive and short span focus.

The researcher was angry and dissappointed for not being able to control her students well. Her students' focus span was very short during the teaching and learning process and this led to misbehaviour.

Behavioural problems is quite stressful to the teachers and other students. Teachers become frustrated when they fail to control these behaviour and apart from that their dissappointment increased when their lesson could not be implemented as planned.

An effective teacher should be able to curb learners' behavioural problems before the lesson begins. The teacher needs to prepare teaching aids to motivate learners with learning disabilities to learn. In fact, the teacher should be ready with appropriate strategies to lure learners' interest. Attractive teaching aids together with relevant strategies will lead to effective learning as learners are more focused. This gives rise to researcher's idea to use an approach so that learners' become interested in learning.

Problem Statement
A child with learning diffiulties often potrays behavioural problems. Amongst the common behavioural problems are aggressiveness, passiveness, negative social behaviours and emotional problems. On the other hand, an effective teacher should be

able to control the learners' behavioural problems before teaching and learning takes place.

Research Objectives

This research was carried out to achieve these objectives in a Malay Language class.
1. To identify the special needs learners' full attendance in the Malay Language class.
2. To identify the special needslearners' full participation in the Malay Language class.
3. To identify the task completed by the special needs learners in the Malay Language class.

Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:
1. How is the Grand Token method able to increase special needs learners' attendance in the Malay Language class?
2. How is the Grand Token method able to increase special needs learners' active participation in the Malay Language class?
3. Does the Grand Token method cause special needs learners able to complete all given tasks in the Malay Language class?

Literature Review

Special Needs Education Teacher should be able to think creatively in order to grasp learners' interest to learn. A learner with behavioural problems is more inclined to disturb friends while learning (Mercer 1992). Short concentration span also leads to lack in focus.

Active learning is one of the teaching strategies that can be used to help them to Remember better. Active learning allows learners to do various tasks using their multisensory. Using multisensory helps in supporting the weaker sensory (Silbermann, 2010). Various activities can be carried out, such as, active learning with elements of games, simulations, food process or using creative teaching aids.

One of the ways which is commonly used to give motivation or to monitor behaviour is by using the economy token. Economy Token is a positive reinforcement to reach successful targets (Jeson, Sloane & Young, 1998). The success will be rewarded in the form of chip star, cute presents or food (Sulzer-Azaroff & Mayer 1996).

The Economy Token triggers the researcher to do an innovation in the form of Grand Token (GT) whereby it is implemented using GT contract to ensure 100 percent positive behaviour change to qualify for using the GT activity in the form of doing an interesting process, such as, making sandwiches, decorating a cake with icing and other interesting activities. Subtly the learners are driven to positive behaviour in order to qualify them to attempt the activities offered.

Research Method

This is a qualitative research. Researcher has chosen the Kemmis & Mc Targgart Model (1998). Structured observation on behavioural problems during lesson is done. Four learners with behavioural problems are selected from the Year Two Special Needs class.

They are 4 down syndrome boys. This research uses the Grand Token method in monitoring behavioural problems among the learners.

The duration of the research are 4 weeks, with accordance to Jorgensen (1989), who said that research duration could be longer or shorter depending on the needs of the research. The stages of the research are as follows:
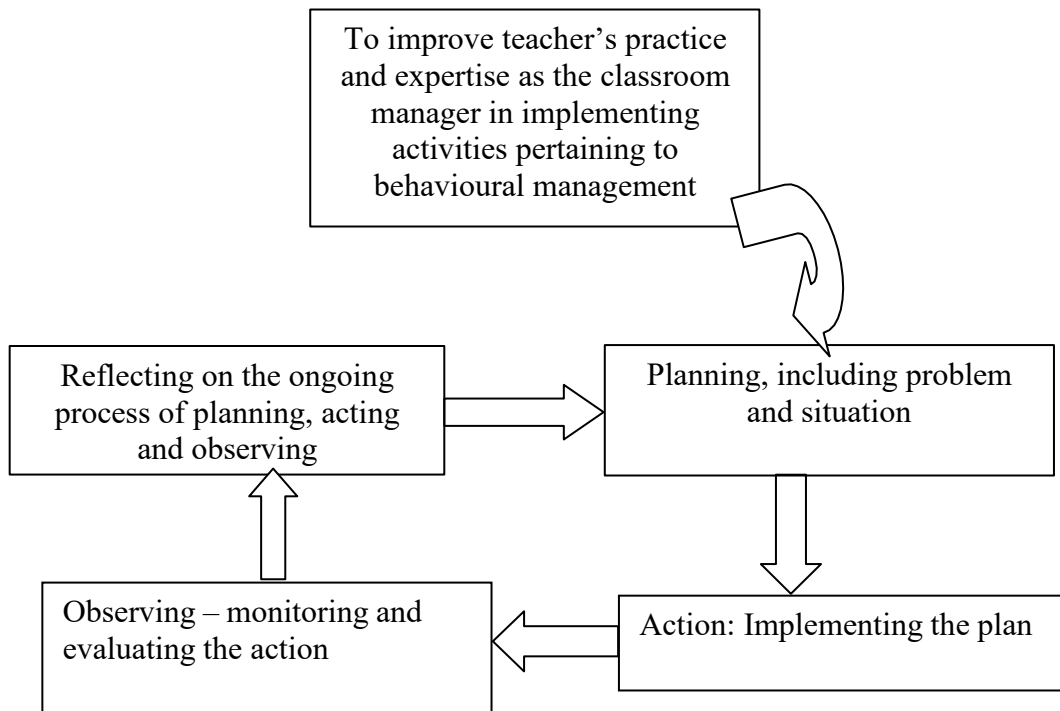

Figure 1 - Application of Kemmis & Mc Taggart Action Research Model (1988)

GT comprises 2 parts; first part is the GT contract form between teacher and learner, where as the second part is the GT reward activity which is prepared after the contract is 100% successful. Only then the the second part can be implemented to the learner.

GT reward comes in the form of active learning activities project which uses food.This activity has been an attractionfor leaners to learn and to help teachers in managing their behaviour towards positive behavioural change.GT reward can also be in the form of other application projects that is interesting, such as, games that enhancelearning.

Table 1 - Grand Token activities

CATEGORIES	GRAND TOKEN ACTIVITIES
FOOD BASED	Gendang Gendut Tali Kecapi (GGTK)
	Gerak Gerak Susun (GGS)
	Terapi ICIQ
	Psikomotor SUT
NON FOOD BASED	Kopai Adik (KA)
	Bagai Aur Dengan Tebing (BADT)

A GT guide book is prepared along with an A4 sized GT contract chart which is easily kept as teacher, parents and counsellors reference document. For easy GT implementation, a CD which comprises guide to GT implementation is provided. Gt activity comprises fun active learning which involved using multi sensory as well as fine motor. Table 1 displays some activities provided. GT activities could also be related to language activities, such as, story telling, reading and an understanding to in order to complete the task.

GT activities is a project that deals with preparing food without cooking and can be done either in the classroom or workshop. The GT project has been manipulated to help change the 'not so focus' attitude in class and to create fun learning environment using food. Food is easy to buy, not expensive, easy to prepare and learners' favourite. At the same time, other GT activities which does not involve food are also fun and interesting.

Before intervention, researcher had been observing 8 students during the teaching and learning process. After analysing their work and recording their behaviour, only 4 learners are chosen. After GT method had been implemented, the observation was carried out for the second time.

Research Instrument

Learners need to complete the GT contract (GT) before being given the (GT). Group leaders and learners must be informed of the contract which will be signed, the behaviour to be achieved, duration of the contract and the GT activity chosen. A few teachers who are involved also need to sign the contract.

Table 2 - Conditions of Grand Token Contract

DURATION	DATE	MARK (√)
ONE WEEK		
ONE MONTH		
ONE SEMESTER		
BEHAVIOUR MODIFICATION CATEGORY		
a. Full Attendance		
b. Active participation during T & L		
c. Completing assignment		
TERMS AND CONDITIONS TO EARN GRAND TOKENS (GT)		
❖ Every student must score 100% for each behaviour management categories		
❖ The Grand Token will only be given to the group whose members have all scored 100%		

With this, I agree to the GT contract:

....

(Muhammad Farhan bin Farid)

Bunga Raya Group Leader

With this, I agree to the GT contract:

....

(Nur Farahin binti Hj Mustahidin)

Bunga Raya Assistant Group Leader

Confirmed by,

....

(Pn Hjh Zaharilah bt Hj Abdul Kadir)

(Language subject teacher)

Witnessed by,

....

Pn Roslimah bt Saat

(Year One Red Class Teacher)

Analysis and Findings
Table 3 shows that the Grand Token contract has been fulfilled by 100 persent. Therefore all participants are elligible for the predetermined GT activity.

Table 3 - Study participants managed to meet Grand Token contract

WEEK AND DATE	CLASS/ GROUP	BEHAVIOUR CATEGORY	PUPIL A	PUPIL B	PUPIL C	PUPIL D	SCORE 100%	TOKEN'S CHOICE
1 & 2 **7/7/2014-** **18/7/2014**	Bunga Raya	**A. FULL ATTENDANCE**	√	√	√	√	100%	**GENDANG GENDUT TALI KECAPI**
		B. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION DURING T&L	√	√	√	√	100%	
		C. ASSIGNMENT COMPLETION	√	√	√	√	100%	

Table 4 refers to unsuccessful contract whereby the study participants failed to achieve 100% changes of behaviour and therefore were not rewarded with the Grand Token.

Table 4 - Study participants failed to meet the Grand Token contract

WEEK AND DATE	CLASS/ GROUP	BEHAVIOUR CATEGORY	PUPIL A	PUPIL B	PUPIL C	PUPIL D	SCORE 100%	TOKEN'S CHOICE
1 & 2 7/7/2014- 18/7/2014	Bunga Raya	A.FULL ATTENDANCE	X	X	X	X	0%	GERAK GERAK SUSUN
		B. ACTIVE PARTICIPATION DURING T&L	X	X	X	X	0%	
		C. ASSIGNMENT COMPLETION	X	X	X	X	0%	

Table 5 shows the GT result throughout its 4 weeks implementation. The participants had successfully change to a positive behaviour before they can proceed with the GT activity as promised. The research participants were able to get full attendance for their Malay Language class , completed all the tasks and be on their best behaviour.

Table 5 - Result of Grand Token Contract for four weeks

WEEK	CLASS/G ROUP	BEHAVIOUR CATEGORY	CLASS TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	SUBJECT TEACHER'S ASSESSMENT	RESULT	ASSESSOR'S ASSESSMENT
1 & 2	Bunga Raya	A.Class full attendance	YES	YES	YES	Inappropriate to gain GT
		B. Active T&L participation	NO	NO	NO	
		C. Task Completion	NO	NO	NO	
3 & 4	Bunga Raya	A. Class full attendance	YES	YES	YES	Appropriate to gain GT – Move & Arrange (GERAK GERAK SUSUN)
		B. Active T&L participation	YES	YES	YES	
		C. Task Completion	YES	YES	YES	

Table 6 - Group Bunga Ros achievement

Group	Duration /Week	Behavioural Change:
BUNGA RAYA	4	A. Full class attendance
		B. Active participation during T&L
	3	C. Task completion
	2	
	1	

Table 6 and Table 5 shows the Bunga Raya group had completed all the positive behavioural changes, that is, full attendance in the Malay Language class, active participation in class and completed all the given tasks in class.Once they had successfully completed all the positive behaviours required upon them within the time frame given, then they are allowed to do the GT activity which they had chosen at the earlier stage. With this, all the three research questions were answered. The research showed the participants were excited to fulfill the contract when they realised that the GT activities are interesting, have game elements and multisensory.
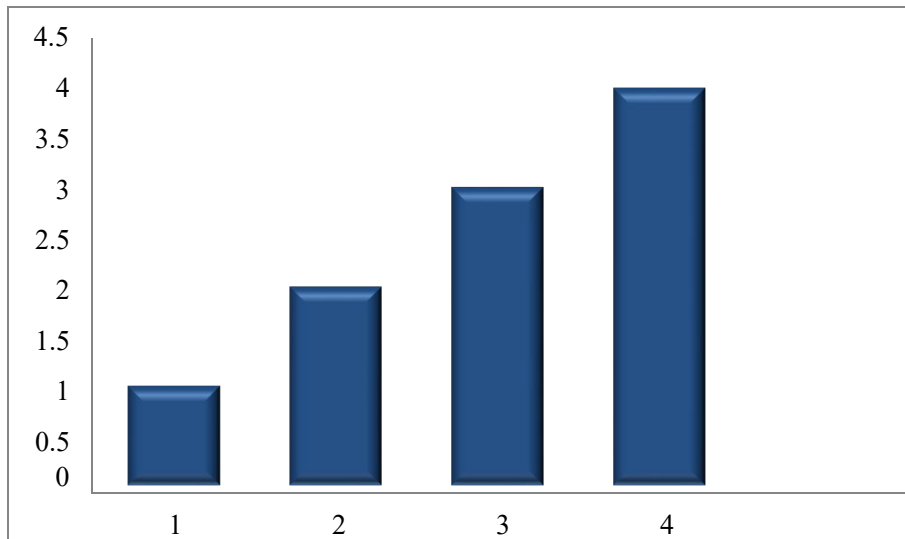

Figure 2 - Changes to positive behaviour – Bunga Raya group

The outcome of the interview with the teachers after the research shows a positive behavioral changes among the target group. As a matter of fact, the participants show a higher degree of interest to study and fully involved in other activities throughout their Malay Language class. The GT activity which is active learning, with the food element and games are able to increase self confidence,

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Suggestion for further research
The tokens offered in this Behaviour Modification Programme are tokens which could initiate learners high thinking order skills. Besides moulding positive behaviour, these tokens also act as reinforcers to enhance learners creative and critical thinking skills.

The GT method could be used in any teaching and learning for the special needs learners to modify their behaviour from negative to positive which leads towards effective learning.

Conclusion

The tokens offered are in the form of various thematic innovative activities. Structured grand token programme has been compiled in the teaching and learning innovation serial book. The Grand Token programme (GT) stressed on the contract that has been agreed. It is able to mould positive behaviour among students as well as giving positive effect to the teaching and learning of language.

Teachers should think creatively in order to produce fun and active teaching and learning environment regardless of whether its from the teaching aids aspect or the teaching strategy used.The use of authentic materials which are multisensory in nature are able to raise learners' interest to be fully involved in the teaching and learning process. Once learners' interest and behaviour are focussed towards the teaching and learning process, then it would be much easier for teachers to implement effective lesson to the special needs learners.

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