

IMPLEMENTATION OF STORYTELLING METHODS TO ENHANCE LANGUAGE SKILLS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AT KB AL-FATH 1

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ABSTRACT

, The purpose of this study is to explore how storytelling can support the development of language skills in early childhood at KB Al-Fath 1. This theme was chosen because language skills are essential for cognitive, socio-emotional development, and children's readiness for formal education. A descriptive qualitative method was used for data collection in this study; observations and interviews were conducted during storytelling activities, and interviews explored the teachers' approaches to implementing this method. The study's results indicate that regularly and interactively using storytelling methods with media such as storybooks, finger puppets, and illustrated images can enrich children's vocabulary, improve their speaking skills, and boost their confidence. Additionally, this method helps children better understand basic language concepts. Despite challenges such as shy or less enthusiastic children, teachers successfully addressed them with emotional support and creative approaches. The study concludes that the storytelling method is effective not only in enhancing language skills but also in supporting the socio-emotional development of early childhood. These findings are significant as they demonstrate that storytelling can be a relevant strategy aligned with national educational standards for early childhood education

Keywords: *storytelling method, language skills, early childhood*

A. INTRODUCTION

Early Childhood Education (PAUD) is an educational stage for children aged 0-8 years aimed at providing guidance, stimulation, and nurturing through various activities that support the development of children's skills and abilities. Early childhood has unique characteristics that distinguish it from other age stages. This period is known as the "golden age," where children exhibit high sensitivity to environmental stimuli, both internal and external. This phase is crucial for laying the foundation of a child's talents, abilities, and social skills in interacting with their environment, including at school.

As an educational institution, PAUD supports children's development through six key aspects: moral and religious values, physical-motor skills, cognitive abilities, social-emotional development, arts, and language (Musyarofah, 2017). Among these, language plays a central role as it is the primary tool for children to acquire information, communicate, and interact. A child's speaking skills can be enhanced through various approaches, one of which is the storytelling method. This approach provides children with opportunities to understand language structure, expand their vocabulary, and improve their communication skills in a fun and interactive way.

Through storytelling, children are not only encouraged to listen but are also given the chance to express ideas, share experiences, and enrich their vocabulary. This method serves as a productive way to develop early childhood language skills by engaging mental activity, confidence, and structured speaking abilities, enabling children to convey messages clearly (Hadi, 2018). Additionally, storytelling activities are effective in enhancing listening, speaking, and socialization skills.

Socialization skills are a vital aspect that needs to be nurtured from an early age. At this stage, children begin learning to express their feelings, needs, and thoughts through words, gestures, or facial expressions. Strong socialization skills help children interact more easily with others, follow instructions, and share ideas confidently. However, not all children naturally possess these abilities. Therefore, specific strategies, such as stimulation through storytelling, are necessary.

This activity has proven effective in supporting the development of children's social and communication skills in an enjoyable learning environment.

At KB Al-Fath 1, children show significant progress in speaking skills, such as speaking more clearly, responding to questions, and communicating with peers. This is supported by a learning program designed to encourage the development of their social skills. One of the strategies used is the storytelling method, where children are invited to share experiences, listen to stories, and respond to what they hear. This method has proven effective in training speaking, listening, and social interaction skills.

This research aims to explore the optimization of the storytelling method at KB Al-Fath 1 to support early childhood language development. Given the importance of language skills as the foundation for cognitive, social-emotional development, and readiness for formal education, this study also seeks to identify storytelling strategies and techniques that yield the best results in fostering children's language development.

B. RESEARCH METHOD

This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to understand how the storytelling method can help improve the language skills of children at KB Al-Fath 1. Data was collected through observation and interviews.

Observation was conducted by watching the children as they shared their holiday experiences in front of their peers and teachers. During this activity, the researcher noted how the children spoke, including their vocabulary usage, sentence structure, and confidence in speaking. The observation also examined the teacher's role, such as assisting children in choosing appropriate words and encouraging them to be more confident. These findings align with research by Hartati (2021), which states that storytelling plays a significant role in enhancing early childhood language skills.

Interviews were conducted with teachers to gather deeper insights into the implementation of the storytelling method in the classroom. Teachers explained their preparations, such as selecting stories, preparing visual aids, and determining engaging approaches for the children. The interviews also covered challenges, such as helping shy or hesitant children speak and strategies used to maintain their interest during storytelling. This research is consistent with the findings of Astiti (2021), which discovered that storytelling improves listening skills in early childhood.

After all data was collected, a simple analysis was conducted to understand the impact of storytelling on children's language development. The results indicate that the storytelling method helps enrich vocabulary, improve fluency, and boost confidence in expressing ideas. This study also provides recommendations for teachers to maximize the use of storytelling in the learning process. These findings support Reza's (2022) research, which confirms that storytelling significantly influences early childhood language development. This study uses a descriptive qualitative method to understand how the storytelling method can help improve the language skills of children at KB Al-Fath 1. Data was collected through observation and interviews.

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C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of the Storytelling Method in Early Childhood Education at KB Al-Fath 1

Based on observation and interview results, the implementation of the storytelling method at KB Al-Fath 1 has positively impacted the language development of young children. Teachers have integrated this method into daily learning activities through interactive and engaging approaches. Interviews with four teachers revealed that storytelling is applied using various techniques, such as:

Reading illustrated storybooks, which help children understand the story through appealing visuals.

Storytelling with expressive techniques, including voice modulation and facial expressions, to maintain children's enthusiasm.

Using props, such as hand puppets and illustrated images, to aid comprehension and memory retention.

Storytelling sessions are conducted at least three times a week, with each session lasting about 20 minutes. Teachers incorporate storytelling into different moments, such as morning journals, post-holiday discussions, or free-drawing activities. This consistency allows children to express themselves, expand their vocabulary, and improve sentence formation.

To support this method, teachers utilize various media, including engaging storybooks, short animated videos, finger puppets, and children's artwork. If a child struggles to speak or retell a story, teachers provide guiding questions or visual aids. Additionally, children are encouraged to express themselves in their own words, fostering comfort and confidence in communication.

Children's Responses to the Storytelling Method Observations and teacher interviews revealed varied responses: Confident children actively participated, retelling stories clearly. Shy children required more encouragement through simple questions, visual aids, and motivational praise.

The method also enhanced peer interaction, as children shared experiences and listened to each other, creating a supportive and enjoyable learning atmosphere. This aligns with Retnowati et al. (2018), who found that illustrated storybooks benefit early childhood development across multiple aspects. Thus, storytelling stimulates verbal and non-verbal interactions, significantly enhancing language development.

Storytelling as a Stimulus for Children's Intelligence

Observations and interviews confirmed that regular storytelling sessions at KB Al-Fath 1 led to positive language development. Children showed:

1. Improved fluency in speaking.
2. Clearer expression of ideas.
3. Expanded vocabulary.

Enhanced ability to respond to stories, ask questions, and retell narratives in their own words.

This aligns with Regulation of the Ministry of Education and Culture No. 137 of 2014, which emphasizes children's ability to ask questions, communicate verbally, and retell stories.

Media Used in Storytelling

Teachers employed various storytelling media to engage children:

1. Illustrated books – Visuals help children connect words with images, improving vocabulary and comprehension.
2. Short animated videos – Beneficial for children who respond better to audiovisual stimuli.
3. Finger puppets – Encourage participation, imagination, and creativity in retelling stories.

According to Wahyuni & Hasanah (2023), storytelling effectively stimulates language development through interactive activities. Consistent use of this method, along with props like storybooks and puppets, boosts children's confidence in communication.

Implementation Stages

1. Lesson planning – Incorporating storytelling into lesson plans (RPP).
2. Core activities – Conducting regular storytelling sessions.
3. Evaluation – Assessing language development progress.

Challenges and Benefits of Storytelling Challenges

1. **Varied child personalities** – Some are confident speakers, while others are shy. Teachers adapt by using individualized approaches.
2. **Limited learning tools** – Damaged books or unengaging media. Teachers creatively solve this by making their own props (e.g., child-made drawings, hand puppets, animated videos).
3. **Parental involvement** – Not all parents recognize storytelling's importance. Teachers provide guidance to encourage home storytelling.

Benefits

Storytelling enhances development in:

- **Language** – Improves speaking skills, vocabulary, and sentence structure.
- **Cognitive skills** – Boosts memory, critical thinking, and problem-solving.
- **Social-emotional skills** – Helps children understand emotions (e.g., happiness, empathy).
- **Creativity** – Encourages imagination and idea exploration.

Research by **Mujahidah (2021)** and **Rusniah (2017)** supports that storytelling strengthens language, cognitive abilities, and social interaction. **Fadlan (2019)** adds that it fosters curiosity and self-confidence.

At KB Al-Fath 1, storytelling has helped children:

- Adapt better socially.
- Develop empathy.

- Learn moral and cultural values early on.

Future Development Plans for Storytelling

To enhance effectiveness, KB Al-Fath 1 plans to:

1. **Integrate literacy elements** – Introduce letters, numbers, and simple words within stories.
2. **Use interactive digital tools** – Apps, audiobooks, and digital storyboards.
3. **Increase parental involvement** – Provide recommended storybooks and storytelling tips for home use.
4. **Blend traditional and tech-based storytelling** – Maintain direct teacher-child interaction while incorporating digital media.

D. CONCLUSION

The storytelling method at KB Al-Fath 1 has significantly improved children's language skills, confidence, and social interaction. Despite challenges like varying enthusiasm and limited resources, teachers creatively adapt by using engaging media and personalized approaches.

Future enhancements include literacy integration, digital storytelling tools, and stronger parent-teacher collaboration. This method is not only effective for language development but also fosters creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence, preparing children for future formal education.

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