

DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE INTELLIGENCE IN CHILDREN AGED 3-4 YEARS THROUGH THE IQRO' READING METHOD IN THE RA KARTINI PLAY GROUP, SENYERANG DISTRICT, TANJUNG JABUNG BARAT REGENCY

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Abstract. This study aims to improve the language intelligence of children aged 3–4 years through the application of the Iqro' reading method in the RA Kartini play group, Senyerang District, West Tanjung Jabung Regency. The background of this research is the low language ability of children which is reflected in the lack of vocabulary, difficulty in responding to questions, and lack of confidence in speaking. The research method used is Class Action Research (PTK) which is carried out in two cycles. Each cycle consists of stages of planning, implementation of actions, observation, and reflection. The results of the study showed a significant increase in the aspects of listening, imitating, and speaking to children. In the initial condition, the average language ability of children only reaches 45%. After the application of the Iqro' reading method in the first cycle it increased to 61%, and in the second cycle it reached 83%. Learning activities are carried out creatively with a play, storytelling, singing, and role-playing approach, which makes the learning process fun and participatory. The conclusion of this study is that the Iqro' reading method, if applied interactively and innovatively, is effective in developing early childhood language intelligence and is able to increase their participation and confidence in communicating.

Keywords: : language intelligence, Iqro' reading method, early childhood, play groups, interactive learning

INTRODUCTION

Language intelligence is one of the important aspects in early childhood development, especially at the age of 3-4 years which is a golden age in the growth and development of cognitive, affective, and psychomotor children. Language skills include not only speaking, but also the ability to hear, understand, and express thoughts and feelings verbally and nonverbally. Therefore, stimulation of language intelligence needs to be carried out appropriately and in a targeted manner from an early age (Suyanto, 2005).

One of the challenges still faced in various early childhood education institutions is the lack of effective and fun methods to stimulate language skills, especially in areas with limited resources. In RA Kartini, Senyerang District, for example, educators still tend to rely on conventional methods that are less interactive in language learning. This has an impact on the slow development of vocabulary, capture, and the ability of children to express ideas orally.

The Iqro' reading method, which has been known as the hijaiyah reading method of learning, can basically be developed into an educational media that is rich in functions, including in the development of children's language intelligence. Through a communicative, visual, and repetitive approach, this method provides

enough stimulation to train concentration, expand vocabulary, and improve children's articulation skills (Hidayat, 2010). When applied creatively and funly, the Iqro' method can be an effective means to foster children's interest in reading as well as communication skills from an early age.

Previous research has also shown that methods that involve visual and auditory elements simultaneously can have a significant effect on improving children's language skills (Fitriani, 2017). Therefore, the application of the Iqro' reading method in the context of play groups is expected not only to familiarize children with hijaiyah letters, but also to stimulate their linguistic abilities as a whole.

Based on the description above, it is important to research the extent of the effectiveness of the Iqro' reading method in developing language intelligence in children aged 3–4 years at RA Kartini, Senyerang District, Tanjung Jabung Barat Regency. This research is expected to contribute to the development of language learning models that are contextual, applicative, and relevant to the needs of early childhood.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a descriptive qualitative approach with the type of class action research (PTK) which is carried out in two cycles. This approach was chosen because it allows researchers to understand the process and results of the application of the Iqro' reading method in developing the language intelligence of children aged 3–4 years in depth and contextual (Sugiyono, 2019).

Research Subject and Location

The subjects in this study were children of the 3-4 year old play group registered at RA Kartini, Senyerang District, West Tanjung Jabung Regency, with a total of 15 students. The research was carried out at the institution for 2 months in the even semester of the 2022/2023 academic year.

Data Collection Techniques

Data was collected through several techniques, namely: Observation: To observe children's activities during learning with the Iqro' reading method, especially verbal behavior, interaction, and listening skills. Interview: Teachers and parents were asked to gather supporting information about children's language development before and after the application of the method. Documentation: In the form of teachers' diaries, photos of activities, and children's works related to language development. Child Performance Assessment: Used to measure children's language skills based on predetermined indicators.

The instruments used in this study are in the form of children's language development observation sheets, interview guidelines, and language development assessment rubrics based on indicators from Permendikbud Number 137 of 2014 concerning National Early Childhood Standards.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data obtained were analyzed qualitatively using the Miles and Huberman model which includes three stages: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification (Miles, Huberman & Saldana, 2014). Supporting quantitative data (e.g. observation scores) were analyzed by calculating the percentage of language development achievement in each cycle.

Data Validity Test

To ensure the validity of the data, this study uses the triangulation technique of sources and methods, namely by comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation so that the data obtained is more valid and reliable (Moleong, 2017).

RESULT AND ANALYSIS

RA Kartini is one of the early childhood education institutions in Senyerang District, West Tanjung Jabung Regency. This institution has a play group with a total of 15 students aged 3-4 years. Most of the children come from families with a middle-to-lower economic background, and there are still many of them who have not received optimal stimulation of language intelligence in the home environment. Teachers at RA Kartini showed enthusiasm in implementing innovative and religious learning methods, including the introduction of hijaiyah letters through the Iqro' reading method.

Based on the results of initial observations, the language skills of children aged 3-4 years in the RA Kartini play group are still relatively low. Some children have difficulty naming objects, responding to the teacher's questions, and speaking in simple sentences. The average achievement of children's language skills only reaches 45%, which includes aspects of listening, imitating, and speaking. Teachers also reported that children tended to be passive in communicating and lacked confidence when speaking in front of their peers.

Cycle I

In the first cycle, the Iqro' reading method was introduced as the main medium in learning. The activity was carried out for four meetings in two weeks. The teacher delivered hijaiyah letter material with a playful approach, using illustrated Iqro' cards, singing letters, as well as listening and imitating activities. At this stage, children begin to show interest in hijaiyah letters and dare to say several letters with the guidance of the teacher.

The results of observation showed an increase in language proficiency achievement to 61%. Children begin to be able to pronounce certain letters, imitate the teacher's pronunciation, and answer simple questions. However, there are still children who are not yet active in speaking and are still limited in vocabulary.

The results of reflection show that the Iqro' reading method is quite attractive to children, but it needs to be added to the variety of activities so that it is not monotonous. Teachers also need to provide opportunities for children to speak more broadly with simple question-and-answer methods and role-playing.

Cycle II

In the second cycle, the teacher added role-playing activities, telling stories with the help of pictures from Iqro', and activities to compile simple words from hijaiyah letters that had been recognized. The activity was carried out during four meetings with a more interactive approach. Teachers give praise and positive reinforcement to every child who dares to speak.

The results of the observations showed that the children seemed more enthusiastic, confident, and began to actively speak. They also began to be able to use simple sentences such as "this is alif", "ba like a ball", or "want to read it, ma'am". The percentage of language proficiency achievement increased to 83%.

Reflections and Results

The results of the reflection show that the Iqro' reading method is effective in improving the language intelligence of children aged 3-4 years when combined with a play approach and interactive dialogue. Children remember letters faster because they are associated with pictures and songs. They are also more confident in speaking because the learning atmosphere is fun and participatory.

Discussion

The results of this study are in line with the findings of Fitriani (2017) that the use of audio-visual methods in early childhood learning can significantly improve language aspects. The Iqro' reading method developed with a communicative approach has been proven to have a positive impact on children's listening, imitating, and speaking skills.

Further, these findings reinforce the theory of language development by Vygotsky which emphasizes the importance of social interaction and scaffolding of adults or teachers in strengthening children's language skills. In this study, the role of teachers as facilitators is very dominant in guiding children to imitate, mention, and understand words through hijaiyah letters.

Children's involvement in role-playing, singing, and reading together is also an important stimulus that not only adds vocabulary, but also builds the child's confidence and courage to express thoughts orally. A fun and contextual learning experience allows children to absorb language naturally without stress.

Thus, the Iqro' reading method, which has only been used for the introduction of hijaiyah letters in a religious context, can be modified into an effective language learning medium in play groups. This opens up opportunities for the development of an integrative learning model between religious aspects and cognitive development aspects, especially language in early childhood.

Research Implications

This research shows that PAUD teachers need to be more creative in utilizing learning media based on religious values as a tool to develop aspects of child development. The Iqro' reading method combined with an approach to play and active communication can be a strategic alternative in supporting language intelligence development programs, especially in areas with minimal access to digital media or modern visual literacy.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that the application of the Iqro' reading method creatively and interactively is able to increase the language intelligence of children aged 3-4 years in the RA Kartini play group, Senyerang District. The learning process that combines play, singing, picture stories, and role-playing approaches makes children more enthusiastic, confident, and active in listening, imitating, and speaking. Thus, the Iqro' reading method is not only effective as a medium for recognizing hijaiyah letters, but also as a means of developing fun and meaningful language aspects for early childhood.

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