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IMPLEMENTATION OF STORYTELLING METHOD THROUGH LETTER CARD MEDIA TO DEVELOP CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE IN AL IZZAH ISLAMIC KINDERGARTEN

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Abstract

This study aims to describe the application of storytelling methods through pop-up book media in developing children's language skills at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarten. The background of this study is the low oral language skills in early childhood which can be seen from children's difficulties in expressing ideas, limited vocabulary, and lack of courage to speak in front of friends. This study uses a qualitative approach with the classroom action method (CAR) which is carried out in two cycles. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and documentation of learning activities. The results of the study showed that the application of storytelling methods with pop-up book media succeeded in significantly improving children's language skills. Children become more active in telling stories, are able to construct simple sentences, expand their vocabulary, and dare to express their opinions. Pop-up books with interesting pictures help children understand the contents of the story and stimulate them to speak. The conclusion of this study is that the storytelling method with pop-up books is an effective and fun strategy to develop early childhood language skills. These results are expected to be a reference for PAUD teachers in optimizing storytelling activities to support children's language development holistically.

Keywords: Storytelling Method, Pop-Up Book, Language Skills, Early Childhood.

INTRODUCTION

Language is one of the most important aspects of development for early childhood, because through language skills, children can get to know the world around them and express what they think and feel. (Larasantika, Tegeh, and Ujiti 2021). At an early age, children are in a golden age of development where their brains develop rapidly, including in terms of language skills. Therefore, appropriate language stimulation is needed to help children develop their speaking skills, understand the meaning of words, and construct simple sentences according to their developmental

stage.(Amelia, Muqodas, and Wulandari 2022). Good language skills also play a major role in supporting children's cognitive development. Language is the main tool for children to gain new knowledge, understand basic concepts, and develop thinking and creativity. When children are able to understand instructions, tell stories, or ask questions they don't understand, the learning process becomes more effective. On the other hand, limited language skills often become an obstacle to children's intellectual development, because they have difficulty understanding explanations or communicating about their needs and feelings.(Ardhiyanti 2017).

In addition to being related to cognitive aspects, language skills are also closely related to children's social-emotional development. Children who have good language skills tend to be more adaptable in social environments, able to establish relationships with peers, and more confident when interacting with others. The ability to express desires, feelings, and opinions will help children overcome conflict, build cooperation, and understand the emotions of others.(Nurfathia, Rahminawati, and Mulyani 2022). This is certainly an important foundation for the growth of empathy, tolerance, and social skills needed in everyday life. Moreover, early language acquisition also prepares children to face the formal education process at school. Children who are skilled in language will be more ready to receive instructions from teachers, understand lesson materials, and actively participate in learning activities. Thus, language development cannot be separated from the entire process of child growth and development. The efforts of parents, educators, and the environment in providing appropriate language stimulation, such as through daily communication, role-playing, storytelling, or reading books together, are very necessary to ensure that children have good language skills as a basis for building intelligence, social skills, and their character in the future.(Divine 2025).

However, in reality, there are still many young children who experience delays in language skills, marked by difficulty in constructing sentences, limited vocabulary, and a lack of courage to speak in front of friends.(Annisa, Musi, and Amal 2022). This condition is also found in Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden, where most children tend to be passive when asked to tell stories or respond to teacher questions. One of the causes of the low language skills of children in Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden is the less varied learning methods, especially in storytelling activities. Teachers still often use conventional storytelling methods without supporting media, so that the stories conveyed seem abstract and difficult for children to understand.(Asti 2023). This makes children less interested in listening to stories and are not encouraged to actively participate in storytelling activities. In fact, fun and interactive storytelling activities are very important to stimulate children's language skills.(Sudezia, Setyawan, and Tirtawati 2025).

In addition, the lack of learning media that supports language development is also a inhibiting factor. Children at an early age need concrete and interesting visual stimuli to help them understand the story. Media such as pop-up books, which have three-dimensional images and surprise elements, are actually very potential to attract children's

attention and help them understand the storyline more clearly. However, teachers at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden have not utilized this media much in learning (Oktafiani, Fatih, and Alfi 2023). Time constraints in teaching and learning activities in kindergarden are also a challenge in themselves. Teachers are often in a hurry to deliver the material, so that there is no opportunity for children to respond to the story or express their opinions. This makes children unaccustomed to speaking and less trained in constructing sentences, so that their language skills develop slowly. Therefore, efforts are needed to create a fun, interactive storytelling atmosphere, and provide space for children to actively communicate (Masykuroh and Wahyuni 2023).

Based on these problems, this study is important to be conducted to determine the application of storytelling methods through pop-up book media as one of the innovative solutions to develop children's language skills at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden. Through this study, it is expected that effective and enjoyable learning steps can be found so that children are more motivated to speak, enrich their vocabulary, and hone their ability to construct sentences well from an early age.

Research methods

This study uses a qualitative approach with a classroom action research (CAR) method. The qualitative approach was chosen because this study aims to describe in depth the process of implementing the storytelling method through pop-up book media in developing children's language skills at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden. Classroom action research was conducted to solve the problem of children's low language skills by implementing actions that were designed, observed, and evaluated systematically. The study was conducted in two cycles, where each cycle consisted of four stages, namely planning, implementation, observation, and reflection. At the planning stage, researchers and teachers prepared a learning plan, selected stories that were appropriate for the child's age, and prepared interesting pop-up book media that were relevant to the theme. The implementation of the action was carried out by the teacher reading a story using a pop-up book in front of the child, inviting the child to discuss the story, and giving the child the opportunity to imitate or retell the contents of the story. (Nartin et al. 2024). Observations were conducted during the learning process to observe the children's involvement, courage, and ability to speak.

Data collection was conducted using three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was used to record children's behavior during storytelling activities, such as interest, active participation, and ability to construct sentences. Interviews were conducted with teachers to obtain information on obstacles, successes, and development of children's language skills during the study.

Documentation in the form of photos of activities, notes on children's development, and recordings of children's storytelling results were also collected to strengthen the data.(Niam et al. 2024). Data analysis was conducted qualitatively with the stages of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data reduction was conducted by selecting data that was relevant to the focus of the research, while data presentation was arranged in the form of narrative descriptions to facilitate understanding. Conclusions were drawn by identifying changes in children's language abilities from cycle I to cycle II. To maintain the validity of the data, this study used triangulation of techniques and sources, namely comparing the results of observations, interviews, and documentation. Through this method, it is hoped that a comprehensive picture will be obtained regarding the effectiveness of the storytelling method with pop-up books in developing the language of early childhood children.(Nartin et al. 2024).

Results and Discussion

The results of the study showed that the application of the storytelling method through pop-up book media at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden succeeded in significantly improving children's language skills. In cycle I, most children were still passive during the storytelling activity, only listening without daring to respond or retell the contents of the story. Children were also still limited in constructing sentences and using simple vocabulary. However, after the teacher began to apply pop-up books with interesting pictures and surprise elements on the pages, children began to show greater interest in the stories being told.

Table 1.
Results of Applying the Storytelling Method with Pop-Up Books to Children's Language Skills

No	Language Ability Indicators	Cycle I Results	Cycle II Results
1	The courage to speak	30% of children dare to answer/ask questions	75% of children actively respond and ask questions
2	Simple sentence structure	Sentences are still hesitant, limited to 2-3 words	More complete sentences, 4-6 words, more coherent
3	Vocabulary mastery	Average knowledge of 10-15 new vocabulary words	Average knowledge of 25-30 new vocabulary words

No	Language Ability Indicators	Cycle I Results	Cycle II Results
4	Participation in storytelling activities	Some children only hear	The majority of children were actively involved in retelling.

Discussion

Based on the table above, there is an increase in children's language skills from cycle I to cycle II after the implementation of the storytelling method using pop-up book media. In the indicator of speaking courage, only 30% of children dared to answer or ask questions in cycle I, while in cycle II it increased to 75% of children who were actively involved in the discussion. This shows that pop-up books are effective in attracting children's interest in speaking because the three-dimensional images in the book make the story more interesting and easier to understand. In the ability to construct simple sentences, children in cycle I tend to use very short sentences with hesitant words. However, in cycle II, children began to be able to construct more complete and coherent sentences, indicating that storytelling activities with pop-up books helped them understand sentence structure. Progress was also seen in vocabulary mastery; children who initially knew 10-15 new vocabulary words in cycle I, increased to 25-30 vocabulary words in cycle II, which were obtained through stories and interactions with teachers. Children's participation in storytelling activities also showed significant differences. If in cycle I the majority of children only listened without daring to speak, in cycle II the majority of children actively responded and even tried to retell the story in their own language. This finding is in accordance with the theory of language development which emphasizes the importance of visual stimulation and two-way interaction to accelerate children's language development. Thus, the application of the storytelling method through pop-up book media has proven effective in improving the language skills of early childhood children.

In cycle II, there was a significant increase. Children began to actively ask questions about the story, respond to teacher questions, and some even took the initiative to imitate the characters in the story with more varied sentences. The use of pop-up books helps children understand the storyline because the three-dimensional illustrations make it easier for them to associate images with the narrative. From the observation results, the number of children who dared to speak in front of the class increased from 30% in cycle I to 75% in cycle II. Children also looked more expressive in telling stories, mentioning the names of characters, places, and events more completely than before. The discussion of the research results shows that the storytelling method through pop-up book media has proven effective as a strategy to develop the language skills of early childhood.

Children who initially tended to be passive during storytelling activities began to show greater enthusiasm, courage to speak, and the ability to construct more complete sentences after this media was implemented. Pop-up books with three-dimensional images and surprise elements on each page attract children's attention and arouse their curiosity about the story being told. This interest encourages children to be more active in responding to the story, asking questions, or even trying to retell it in their own language.

These results support Vygotsky's theory of language development, which emphasizes the importance of stimulation through social interaction and the use of interesting visual media in accelerating children's language development. According to Vygotsky, children learn language through the process of interaction with adults and their surroundings, so the presence of a teacher who reads stories with full expression, coupled with pop-up books that present concrete visual experiences, creates a learning situation that is conducive to children's language development. Children not only learn from listening to stories, but also through conversations that occur during storytelling activities, which enrich their vocabulary and sentence-building skills.

In addition, pop-up books provide a fun and contextual learning experience because the stories told can be related to children's daily experiences. For example, stories about honesty, cleanliness, or kindness can be easily understood because children see illustrations of events in the book directly. This condition makes children not only listen to stories passively, but also actively participate in discussions, express opinions, or try to imitate the conversations of characters in the story. This active learning process not only helps children develop language skills, but also builds their confidence to speak in front of friends or teachers. In addition, responsive teacher interactions when children tell stories, such as giving praise and adding new vocabulary, also play an important role in enriching children's language. Teachers who are able to relate stories to children's daily experiences make learning more meaningful. The obstacle found during the study was that not all children were able to focus for a long time, so teachers needed to regulate the duration of the story so that it was not too long and still maintained children's attention. However, overall, the application of the storytelling method with pop-up books has been proven to be able to improve children's language skills at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the research that has been conducted on the application of the storytelling method through pop-up book media at Al Izzah Islamic Kindergarden, it can be concluded that this method is effective in developing the language skills of early childhood. The use of pop-up books that have attractive illustrations and three-

dimensional elements has been proven to attract children's attention, make them more enthusiastic about listening to stories, and make it easier for them to understand the storyline being conveyed. Children not only listen passively, but are also actively involved through asking questions, responding to stories, and trying to retell them in their own language. This has a positive impact on the ability to construct simple sentences, enrich vocabulary, and increase children's courage to speak in front of friends and teachers. The increase in children's language skills can be seen from the significant difference between cycles I and II. In cycle I, only a small number of children dared to speak, while in cycle II most children showed activeness in discussing and retelling the contents of the story. Children are also more fluent in constructing sentences with a more complete structure, and using a more diverse vocabulary. This shows that the storytelling method with pop-up books can create a learning experience that is fun, contextual, and in accordance with the developmental stages of early childhood. This conclusion is in line with Vygotsky's theory which emphasizes the importance of stimulation through social interaction and visual media in supporting children's language development. Teachers who apply the storytelling method with pop-up books not only act as storytellers, but also as facilitators who encourage children to actively communicate, express ideas, and practice constructing sentences. This study also shows that a fun learning approach that actively involves children is more effective than conventional learning that is only one-way. Therefore, the application of the storytelling method through pop-up books is highly recommended as an innovative strategy to improve the language skills of early childhood, and can be an inspiration for other PAUD teachers in creating meaningful learning activities and supporting optimal language development.

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