

IMPROVEMENT OF CHILDREN'S LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH SINGING ACTIVITIES

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Abstract: Education as a dynamic process in which children develop according to the inner terms of their lives, with their "voluntary work" when placed in an environment that is prepared to give them freedom of self-expression. One aspect that needs to be developed from an early age is language, the most ideal for learning a language other than the mother tongue (first language). The purpose of this research was to find out and get information about children's language improvement through singing activities, Research Subject was students at Kindergarten Al Marjan Bekasi. The type of research methodology is a descriptive qualitative method. Source of the data for this research took from the principal and teachers. The object were 26 students of Group B. Data collection technique through the results of the observations, interviews, documentation and field notes as data supporting. The type of observation used is passive participation observation. The stages of data analysis were consisted of data before, data in the field, and after completion of the field. Data validity checking techniques are based on credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability. In checking the validity researcher used a degree of trust, with platform learning at home using social media as a communication tool between teachers and students. The result of this research, there is a significant increasing children's language skill through singing activities.

Keywords: *Language development; singing; children*

INTRODUCTION

Education as a dynamic process in which children develop according to the "provisions in" of their lives, with their "voluntary work" when placed in an environment prepared to give them freedom in self-expression (Montessori, 2015). Early childhood is an individual who is undergoing a process of rapid development and is very fundamental for the next life. It has its own world and characteristics that are different from adults. Children are always active, dynamic, enthusiastic, and want to know what they see and hear, as if they don't stop learning. Children are also egocentric, naturally curious, social, unique, rich in fantasy, have short attention span, and are a potential period for learning. Children naturally and energetically strive to achieve functional independence. An inherent drive, which Montessori calls "God's impulse" encourages children to self-activity to undertake activities that support growth, leading to further development and greater independence.

The Law on the National Education system in article 1 paragraph 14 states that early childhood education is an effort of guidance shown to children from birth to the age of six which is carried out by providing educational stimuli to assist physical and spiritual growth and development so that children have readiness in entering education which is designed according to the child's level of development (Aisyiyah, 2007).

One aspect that needs to be developed from an early age is language. Early childhood is the golden age or the most ideal time to learn a language other than the mother tongue (first language). Children's brains are still plastic and flexible, so the process of language absorption in children functions automatically. This phenomenon is triggered, among others, by the obsession of parents who want their children to speak quickly. It is enough with self-exposure to a certain language, for example if he lives in an environment that speaks a language other than his mother tongue, children will easily be able to master the language, that golden

period is not owned by adults.

Factors that cause low early childhood language skills such as family backgrounds that do not support language learning, unattractive learning approaches, inappropriate selection of language teaching materials at school, less warm communication between teachers and students, and less varied delivery in learning language in early childhood.

In the classroom the teacher uses Classical Method / Teacher center which is used to make children become bored and less active in learning. The teacher also does not teach the language component as a whole, it seems that the teacher only teaches vocabulary but ignores its meaning. The child may not have heard perfectly in all of their component parts, the words he speaks and if he has heard perfectly, may be pronounced poorly, and consequently leave a false auditory perception. It would be better if the child, by practicing the motor channels of the spoken language, will be able to form rapidly the movements necessary for perfect pronunciation, before the period of ease of motor adaptation has passed and if faulty mechanisms have become established, these deficiencies cannot be fixed (Montessori, 2015)

The right method is needed so that later early childhood children will master the use of appropriate and correct language, of course, not forgetting the element of joy so that the concept of playing while learning can run well. One method to use is the singing method, for example in the process of learning to count, children sing a song entitled "Let's Count". In teaching using the counting song, the teacher can teach how to count, so that the child is able to say the correct numbers. By singing / the song, the child will find it easier and understand how to count in the song, and of course the language skills for early childhood will be easier for children to understand. According to Montessori (2005), early childhood education is a form of education that focuses on laying the foundation towards growth and development: Religion and Morals, Physical, Motor, Cognitive, Language, Social-

Emotional and Art, in accordance with the uniqueness and stages of development according to the age group through early childhood as stated in Permendikbud (2014) concerning to Early Childhood Education National Standards (replacing Permendiknas, 2009).

Language is a series of sounds that symbolize human thoughts, feelings, and attitudes (Suhartono, 2005). In human life it is inseparable from interaction and communication. The communication uses a language because with language, humans will interact with each other easily. Early childhood are in the vulnerable age 0-6 years. In general, children of this age are not yet able to write and read. Early childhood language is the language used by children to convey desires, thoughts, hopes, requests, etc. for the benefit of their personality (Suhartono, 2005).

Aspects related to children's language development, namely vocabulary, syntax (grammar), semantics, and phonemes (the smallest sound that distinguishes words) (Jamaris, 2005). Saputra (2005) states that in general there are two types of children's language development, namely: (a) the child speaks to himself (egocentric speech), and (b) the conversation occurs when the child is in contact with other children or with their environment (socialized speech). It is in this social language that children begin to be able to adapt, convey command words, requests, ask questions, and form language skills possessed by early childhood.

Early childhood language development is influenced by a variety of things, according to Yusuf in Saputra (2005) explains the five factors that influence language development, namely: 1) Sensory health factors, because children who are unhealthy since toddlers can cause slowness or even difficulty in language development. 2) Intelligence factors, children with rapid language development generally have the ability of intelligence normal or above normal. 3) Factors of socioeconomic status, children who come from poor families usually experience delays in language development. This is due to the lack of

learning opportunities given by parents to children. 4) Gender factors, boys and girls have different voices or vocabulary with age development. Usually, girls show language development faster than boys. 5) Factors of family relationships, Children who are treated well by their families will communicate more quickly with their environment. Helping children to develop their language faster.

The main function of language for humans is as a means of communication. Likewise with early childhood which is part of an early age human, language is also used as a means of communication. The opinion of Suhartono (2005) explains that based on Halliday's research which classifies early childhood language, it is divided into seven functions, including: 1) Instrumental function, is a language for early childhood to give expressions, including the language of babies to ask for something.

An example of this function is a baby who feels hungry and asks for food to the person closest to him by saying "maa ... eat" or "mamamm. 2) The command function is the language of the child used to tell other people to do something. 3) Interaction function, Early childhood language contained in expressions which creates a climate for interpersonal relationships. An example in the phrase "when? Where?" etc. 4) Problem solving function, is a function of early childhood language in an expression that asks or states an answer to a problem or problem. Example "why is Dita crying mom?" 5) The function of personality, is an expression that states or ends partisipasi. If early childhood feels a good meal, they tend to say "good" or "son ... child .." 6) Imaginary function, is an expression that invites listeners to pretend or simulate a situation like what a child is doing while playing. 7) Informative function. The role of this function is sometimes too late to develop. However, unfortunately most of them are found in the school environment, namely informative functions that can be presented in school as a product and not as a process. In the above explanation, it can be concluded that language provides benefits for children's speech development, and one

aspect of children's language development is vocabulary, because vocabulary is part of the words that are spoken when the child speaks.

The role of language for early childhood

Language is the most important means of communication. As the most important means that must be introduced to children from the start in order to provide child development assistance. Language has an important role for early childhood, according to Suhartono (2005), it is explained that language planning specifically for early childhood, namely: 1) Language as a means of thinking Early childhood sometimes cannot convey what he wants by the correct sentence, one of the ways that the child does by crying so that people around him approach and ask what happened to the child, then the child can say what he wants in a few words. When the child cries. Children think that their parents will come to them, this shows that language is a means of thinking, then the words that are spoken after their parents approach them are the development of the child's vocabulary which is applied to ask for something.

2) Language as a means of listening, When the baby is born into the world, they do not know language. In the family, the communication used the language they often use, indirectly the baby hears it and knows the meaning of the spoken sounds of the family. In addition, the mother or father can also introduce language by talking to the baby and helping him with demonstrations. For example, the mother says "let's drink first" while giving milk to the baby. Indirectly the child hears and knows the meaning of the word he has heard.

3) Language as the role of reading and writing. The language that is often heard in the family and in the surrounding environment will have a higher role for the children. After the children understand and know the language further after being in their family, the children have the desire to be able to write down the language that is often heard by practicing writing and reading. It is usually the final stage of the semester or at the beginning of entering elementary school.

From the explanation of the role of language according to language development in children is the ability to communicate orally with their surroundings. Language development in children is the ability to communicate orally with their surroundings. Everywhere language is one of the areas of basic ability development prepared by teachers to improve children's abilities and creativity according to the stage of development. Language skills in early childhood must be developed optimally. Consequently, adults and educators must provide and create a learning environment that supports the optimal development of language skills in early childhood. Through appropriate singing, vocabulary, creativity and the ability of children to imagine can develop children's thinking so that their intelligence development can take place properly.

Singing is a fundamental musical activity because children can hear through their own senses, voice various pitches and musical rhythms with their own voices (Mahmud, 1995). The opinion from Jamalus (1975), who thinks that singing is an art to express human thoughts and feelings through tones and words. From the opinion of experts regarding the meaning of singing, it can be concluded that singing is an art that expresses human thoughts or feelings with his senses in the form of sound which produces a song consisting of lyrics containing words and tones.

The success or failure of the singing learning method depends on the education or on the teacher in singing the song. If the educator is motivating in delivering the songs, the children will be interested in listening to and in imitating them. Interest is in accordance with the conditions of early childhood, according to the characteristics of early childhood, the child's environment and language that is easy to understand. Hidayat (2003) states that with appropriate singing activities, children can easily understand the environment and language. Add vocabulary to language, be creative, and imaginative (in terms of intelligence). Channel emotions, create feelings of pleasure (in terms of

emotions), train body muscles, coordinate body movements (in terms of motor), play together (in terms of social)

This opinion was strengthened by Rasyid (2010) that singing activities have benefits for children, among others are listening, enjoying singing, experiencing joy when singing together, expressing thoughts, feeling happy, and moods, learning to control voices, expressing inner feelings, the ability to demonstrate abilities. Mahmud (199) explains that music in the form of singing affects children's language development. Singing (singing) has the benefit of increasing the ability to understand the meaning of what other people are saying will develop quickly, even though the object in question does not appear to be present. Children realize that language is an important tool for communicating and socializing with other people.

From the above explanation, it can be concluded that the singing learning method can provide benefits for early childhood as an attraction for learning, increase children's learning motivation, especially children's language development because it is able to increase vocabulary and understand the meaning of what is being said even though the object in question does not appear to be present.

The Effect of Singing on Children's Language Development

Chanting can also develop a social aspect. This is especially possible in the activities of playing together. The period of the most intensive development of speech and language in humans lies in the first three years of life, a period in which the human brain develops in the process of reaching maturity. The ability to speak in humans will develop well in an atmosphere filled with sounds and images, and continue to play in Early Childhood Education through singing which is a very popular activity and is carried out by early childhood in their daily activities.

In fact, this activity is carried out in various events such as major holidays and year-end Early Childhood Education

activities. Obtaining a meaningful understanding, the musical elements must be provided through the main activity, namely singing. The teacher can choose songs that are familiar to the child, or new songs that are easy to teach, the song as a model song, and be used as a source of discussion of the elements of the song contained therein. Singing here is part of the life and development of the soul of every human being. Since being in the womb a child has several aspects related to music.

This aspect is accepted and influenced by various experiences that are natural or natural in the process of life, so that a song or song can have an impact on a person. For children, songs will influence and develop about values that can change treatment attitudes towards maturity. In addition, songs can also change the attitude of treatment towards maturity. In addition, songs can also provide motivation, interest, and one's talent for singing. Singing can not only enrich the spiritual life, but also provide a balance of life. Singing is a means of entertainment. Through singing, humans not only express thoughts and feelings, but also control their emotional aspects.

Several studies that can be used as a reference, including research conducted by Jati (2006), entitled: "The use of the singing method to overcome speech difficulties in Aisiyah Gemolong Kindergarten, Gemolong District, Seragen Regency, 2005/2006. Based on the results of her research concluding that there is language development that is better than before the study, it can be proposed that the language development through the singing method can overcome speech difficulties in kindergarten children.

Another research from Kusuma (2009) entitled "An Overview of the Role of Singing Activities in Early Childhood Language Development" in Budi Mulya Kindergarten. According to the results of research that has been done is by interviewing, observing, documenting it can be concluded that singing activities can be started by appreciating first. To strengthen the results of this study, a study is needed that can provide other alternatives so that singing

activities are proven to develop language development. in early childhood.

METHOD

The purpose of this research is to obtain information about children's language improvement through singing activities, Research Subject is students of Al Marjan Kindergarten Group B in Bekasi City. This research was conducted during 6 months from September 2020 to February 2021. The research methodology used descriptive analysis method. Descriptive analysis method is an analysis which aims to understand what the research subjects experience holistically in a descriptive way, in a form of words and language, in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods (Bungin, 2015).

Based on the consideration of the parties who can provide the information and data needed in this research and the parties who participate, the data source in this study were the principal / informant, class teacher. While the object in the study was 26 students of the Children's Education Park Group B.

Data collection techniques are the result of observations, interviews, documentation and field notes, portfolios and supported by documents and also reports as secondary data. The type of observation used is passive participation observation. So, the researcher came to the place of the institution being observed, but was not involved in the activity. The type of interview used in this study is a semi-structured interview.

Semi-structured interviews are included in the in-dept interview category, where the implementation is freer. Researcher can add questions outside of the interview guidelines to reveal more in the respondent's opinion. Before conducting interviews, researchers must prepare interview guidelines so that the interview process does not go out of context and remain focused. Interview technique, this technique is used as a support in order to obtain data that cannot be collected using questionnaires and documentation (Sukardi, 2011).

The researcher came face to face with the respondent or subject being studied. The

stages of data analysis in this research consist of analysis of data before the field, analysis of data in the field, analysis of data after completion of the field. The analysis technique in this research is the Analysis Interactive Model consisting of data collection (data collection), data reduction (data reduction), data display (data presentation), and conclusions (drawing conclusions) (Miles & Huberman 1992).

Data validity checking techniques are based on the four criteria used, namely the degree of trust (credibility), transferability (dependability), and certainty (confirmability). In checking the validity of this data, the researcher uses a degree of trust.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of data before entering the school to conduct the research, first prepare all the needs of the research. Data sources are obtained from the Principal as the informant, as well as from class teachers. The researcher analyzes the data that would be used to determine the focus of the research. As supporting data, the secondary data includes the history of the establishment of the school, the development of language at Al Marjan Kindergarten in Bekasi City, the condition of teachers, students, and infrastructure. The researcher also collects school and teacher data, documents or any other relevant sources.

Field data analysis

The number of students is 26 students, with 2 class teachers. The teachers use child-centered learning strategies. children are free to explore learning activities and imagination in language improvement through communication, and activities conveyed by teachers.

Teachers function as facilitators to help the children when needed and to supervise the children's activities until the end of the lesson. Based on the preliminary analysis, it has showed that in children's language development, 12 students have met the criteria of developing very well, 8 students developing as expected, and 6

students fulfilling the criteria for development.

The assessment for children's language development is carried out by the classroom teachers who daily observe the children's development, so that it is assumed that they know more about the children's development, with the results

BB = Not Developed -> 40% to 50%

MB = Start Growing -> 50% to 60%

BSH = Developing as expected -> 70% to 80%

BSB = Very Well Developed. --> 81% and above

Table 1. *Learning Activity I*

Item No Indicator	Learning Activities I (Indicator)	Student Evaluation Results(%)
1	Role-playing and using hand puppets	70
2	State Name and Identity	75
3	Sing the names of the days, by tearing and pasting the illustrated paper	75
4	Tell stories and sing and Retelling	70
5	Playing quizzes, Crumpling and Spinning Paper,	70

Based on the data above, it can be seen that students who understand role playing and use hand puppets are as many 75% mention names and identities, sing the names of the day, tear and paste pictorial paper as many as 75% of the children, tell stories, sing and retell as many as 70% of the children, play quizzes, squeeze and spin the paper as many as 70% of the children.

Based on percentage data above, the researcher is not satisfied with the results achieved. Therefore, the researcher held the next activity. The pictorial paper is as many as 84% of the children, telling stories and singing and retelling are as many as 81% of the children, playing quizzes, wringing and rotating the paper are as many as 85% of the

children. The mentioned names and identities, singing the names of the day, tearing and pasting.

Table 2. *Learning Activities II*

Item No Indicator	Learning Activities II (Indicator)	Student Evaluation Results (%)
1	Role-playing and using hand puppets	82
2	State Name and Identity	85
3	Sing the names of the days, by tearing and pasting the illustrated paper	84
4	Tell stories and sing and Retelling	81
5	Playing quizzes, Crumpling and Spinning Paper,	85

Based on the data above, it can be seen that students who understand role playing and use hand puppets are as many as 82% of children, 85% of the children

Based on the Implementation of Learning Activities II, the learning activities provide very significant results so that the improvement of children's language through singing activities greatly helps teachers and students in carrying out learning activities more effectively and efficiently. As supporting data, field notes were also made by the class teacher as follows:

1. Field notes of preliminary observation results.

Date and time: Monday, September 7, 2020.
 Activities / Materials: Evaluation of Group Children's Language Development. Time: 07:30 WIB. Data source: Teachers and Group Children B

Field notes

In the initial meeting of the researcher at Al Marjan Kindergarten. Thanks God, at this initial meeting all children have started to

participate in language learning through singing activities even though it must be with the guidance of the researcher. However, there are some children who are not yet interested in participating in singing activities. With the given motivation, finally the children want to follow even though they are still with a little guidance. There is a child named Siti who still doesn't want to follow because she is too shy. Nevertheless, the researcher always provides encouragement and motivation to those children and accompany them so that they want to participate in singing activities.

2. Field Notes of Final Observation Results

Date and time : Friday, November 27, 2020.
 Activities / Materials : Evaluation of Group Children's Language Development. Time: 07:30 WIB. Data source: Teachers and Group Children. Class: Zoom Room. Total students: 26.

Field notes

In the last meeting of the researcher at Al Marjan Kindergarten, Alhamdulillah, in this final meeting, all children can enthusiastically participate in language learning activities through singing activities. The teacher is only a facilitator to help children in their learning activities.

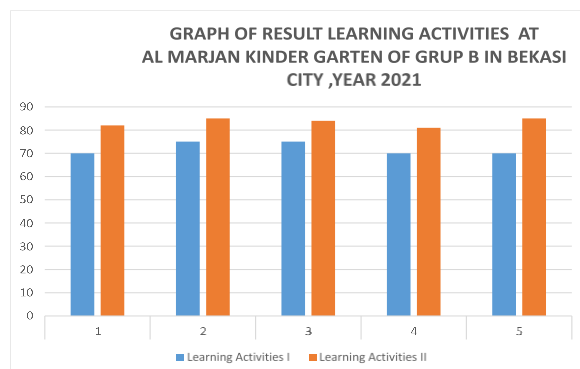
Analysis data after completion of the field

Analysis of research data on learning activities at TK Al Marjan, in Bekasi, as follows:

Class : Zoom
 Total students : 26

Table 3. Learning Activity

Item No Indicator	Learning Activities (Indicator)	Student Evaluation Results(%) Learning Activities I	Student Evaluation Results (%) Learning Activities II
1	Role-playing and using hand puppets	70	82
2	State Name and Identity	75	85
3	Sing the names of the days, by tearing and pasting the illustrated paper	75	84
4	Tell stories and sing and Retelling	70	81
5	Playing quizzes, Crumpling and Spinning Paper,	70	85



CONCLUSION

The implementation of language development learning activities through singing activities carried out by the teachers through early childhood singing activities in Group B at Al Marjan Kindergarten in Bekasi City, has gone well with the results of student evaluations developing very well.

The learning strategy used is child-centered, so as to provide freedom for children in developing their talents and creativity in communicating in learning. Besides that, the teachers use language learning in singing activities in all subjects. They implement various language learning in singing activities in one meeting. They choose singing and storytelling games that are in accordance with the material. They use interesting learning media, manage classes, focus on language learning with habituation techniques through singing, re-explaining the meaning of learning, evaluating each student's behavior when the learning process takes place.

The barrier factors for teachers of Group B at Al Marjan Kindergarten in implementing language development include: lack of sufficient time because during Covid-19 pandemic, the time given is

very limited. The teachers can not directly supervise online learning. The researcher realizes that during Covid-19 pandemic, teachers cannot communicate directly with students, but singing activities as a language improvement learning activity at Al Marjan Kindergarten, Bekasi City can be a reference for teachers to use in their classes by paying attention to indicators that have been defined as a reference in teaching.

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