



The Effect of Using Letter Card Media on the Language Ability (Literacy) of Children Aged 4-5 Years at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan-Binjai KM.13.5 In Academic Year 2021/2022

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ABSTRACT

The research aims to explain the significant influence of letter card media on the language (literacy) abilities of children aged 4-5 years at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah for the 2021/2022 academic year. The research design uses one group pretest-posttest from the pre-experimental design. The population in this study were all class A children aged 4-5 years at RA Tsamaniaun Hasanah with a total of 15 children. The results of the research showed a total score (pre-test) of 65 and a total score (post-test) of 159. A comparison between the scores (pre-test) and the scores (post-test) of the experimental group was then analyzed and the result was $W_{count} = 0$, $W_{table} = 25$ with comparison conditions if $W_{count} < W_{table}$ then H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. Thus, the letter card media influences language skills (literacy) in class A RA TSAMANIATUN HASANAH Sei Semayang Village.

INTRODUCTION

Early childhood education (PAUD) is the most basic education in the world of education because, for children from birth to 6 years old, there needs to be a stimulus for providing education to help children grow so that they are ready to enter further education which is held in formal, non-formal, and informal.

According to Mansur (2013) in Lilis Madyawati (2016) early childhood education is one of the educational providers that focuses on laying the foundation for growth and 6 developments, namely moral and religious development, physical development (gross and fine motor coordination), art, intelligence or cognitive (thinking power and creative power), socio-emotional (attitudes and emotions), language and communication, according to the uniqueness and stages of development according to the age group experienced by early childhood.

Education at an early age is a vehicle for education that is very influential in the formation and development of basic knowledge, attitudes, and skills in children. The success of the educational process in the early years becomes the basis for the subsequent educational process. The learning process given to children must pay attention to the characteristics of each stage of development in children. The implementation of education in early childhood education institutions, such as playgroups, similar PAUD units, child care centers, or kindergartens is very dependent on the educational system and processes implemented.

The government hopes that with early childhood education, students can prepare themselves to become human beings who have noble morals, have sufficient knowledge, and improve the skills that children have. One of the levels of education provided by the government is *raudhatul athfal* an educational institution which was established to make students ready to live their future lives by honing the children's abilities. In its implementation, the teaching and learning process that takes place at *Raudhatul Athfal* is quite often faced with various problems, one of the shortcomings is the children's ability to hone their language skills and the lessons delivered are still lacking in extensive explanation. Success in learning is of course influenced by several important aspects in the development of children's language skills, including the child's basic abilities, the child's learning motivation, and the learning media used by the teacher in the class.

Teachers must develop all the talents possessed by students. Each student has different characteristics and also has their strengths and weaknesses, but as a professional teacher, it is hoped that they will be able to overcome the various problems they face in the classroom by implementing the latest innovations in teaching and learning activities. So that the objectives of each lesson can be achieved well and learning becomes more active, interactive, creative, effective, and fun.

Language (literacy) abilities in children require a medium that is used directly by teachers to support the teaching and learning process. According to Khanifatul (2013), one of the factors that can create a pleasant learning

atmosphere is by using varied, innovative, and creative media. Apart from that, a teacher must also be able to encourage his students to be actively involved in learning by allowing each student to try asking, answering questions, and expressing ideas directly with the vocabulary they know. According to Kamin Sumardi (2009), literacy education is an effort to improve children's abilities in reading and writing skills that depend on life. Literacy is one of the three parts of the scope of development of language abilities, namely expressing language, receiving language, and literacy.

Based on the results of observations made in group A at Raudhatul Athfal Tsamaniatun Hasanah, it can be seen from the results of letter recognition activities carried out by the teacher, it appears that there are still many children who have not memorized the shape of the letters. This is because the learning process is felt to be less than optimal. Due to the lack of media that stimulates children, they are less than optimal. The media used during letter recognition learning activities only uses paper that is cut into pieces and written on with a black marker, because of the limited media available at school so it does not attract children's interest and attention in playing to recognize letters. Children become inactive in participating in activities taking place.

Based on problem identification, to improve language (literacy) skills in children so that children are interested and achieve the expected results, one of the activities that can improve language (literacy) skills is by using letter cards as media. According to Azhar Arsyad, 2005 (in Trisnawati's thesis, 2014) revealed that letter cards are alphabet cards that contain pictures, letters, and symbols, which improve or guide children about these symbols. However, the letters referred to here are media that we make ourselves from square cardboard with colorful letter symbols that we stick on the cardboard so that the media is attractive to children. For this reason, using letter card media is expected to improve language skills (literacy) and achieve the expected results for all students.

So the letter card media can help teachers to achieve all instructional goals because apart from being a cheap and easy medium to make or obtain, it can also increase children's activeness in learning. Apart from that, children's knowledge and understanding become broader, clearer, and not easily forgotten. According to Lilis Madyawati, (2017), several activities can improve language skills (literacy) in children, namely word quizzes, guessing words, guessing letters, and matching words, matching letters, recognizing objects with letter prefixes, and composing letters.

Based on the description above, the researcher is interested in conducting experimental research entitled "The Effect of Using Letter Card Media on the Language Ability (Literacy) of Children Aged 4-5 Years at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan-Binjai KM.13.5 In Academic Year 2021/2022"

LITERATURE REVIEW

Children's Language Ability (Literacy).

Ahmad Susanto (2012) early literacy is a process or stage to train children to read after the child is ready to read and understands the letters and their sounds one by one, they recognize syllables, then they recognize words, and finally, they become sentences. Language skills (literacy) are the initial stage for children to recognize letters so they can read and write. Literacy in early childhood involves children's language abilities, especially children's ability to recognize literacy symbols (letters and numbers). Language ability (literacy) has 4 aspects, namely reading, listening, writing, and speaking. Soedjono Darjowidjojo (2003) stated that knowing letters is the initial stage for a child's development to be able to know the shape and sound of letters so that children can know the shape, sound, and recognize the letters. The child's ability to know and understand letter symbols can be seen when the child can name the letter symbols, and the child's ability to understand letters can be seen from the child's ability to write the shape of the letter according to the direction of the letter that the child must write. Children are unique individuals who have different characteristics.

The characteristics of language abilities in early childhood according to Jumaris (2004) are as follows:

1. Able to show himself with the pronoun I.
2. Language skills are well developed.
3. Mastering the phonemes and syntax of the language used.
4. Understand something he sees or hears.
5. Able to express his wishes with simple sentences.
6. Able to understand pictures and tell them in words.

Letter Card Media

Azhar Arsyad (2005) in Trisniwati (2014) stated that letter cards are cards containing letters that can improve or guide children to better understand how to differentiate the letters of the alphabet. The letter cards referred to here are letter cards made by yourself in a square shape, made from white paper, and covered with used cardboard. The use of these letter cards attracts children's attention and is easy for children to understand so that children can learn to write and read at the beginning. Apart from that, letter cards can also train the creativity of teachers at school. Vinca Ambarini (2006), says that letter cards are a collection of cards in which there are letters of the alphabet starting from the letter A to the letter Z which are given pictures and words to support children to understand and memorize the alphabet A to Z. Meanwhile, Maimunah Hasan (2009) revealed that letter cards are the use of cards as a tool to help children learn to read and write by seeing and remembering the shape of the letters written on the cards.

According to Lilis Madyawati, (2017), several activities can improve children's language (literacy) skills, namely word quizzes, word guessing, and letter guessing. Children look for or guess the letters shown by the teacher, and then match the letters given by the teacher. Match words, match letters, that is, children match the initial letter with the picture

shown by the teacher. Composing letters, where children rearrange puzzle pieces that have been designed irregularly, and Recognizing objects with letter prefixes, namely books that only contain the initial letters of a picture which must be described simply by the child.

This is in line with the function of the letter card game. Maimunah Hasan (2009) in Trisniwati (2014) states that several benefits can be taken from letter card games, namely that they can make children better at reading more quickly, can develop children's memory, and increase children's vocabulary.

Letter card media also has advantages and disadvantages, according to Arif Sadiman, et al (2008), its advantages and disadvantages consist of its advantages, namely that it is more concrete or more realistic in showing the main problem compared to purely verbal media, and can overcome space and time limitations. Not all objects, objects, or events can be brought to class, and students cannot always be brought to these objects or events, can overcome teacher limitations in their observations, can clarify a problem topic in any field and for any age level so that it can prevent misunderstanding, the price is cheaper, it is also easy to obtain and can be used without requiring special equipment. The weaknesses are that it only emphasizes eye sense perception, objects that are too complex are less effective for learning activities, and the size is very limited for large groups.

The technique for making letter cards consists of preparing paper from cardboard. This paper serves to stick the letters to make them look thicker. Cut the cardboard using scissors or a cutter with a size of 5 x 5 cm. Make several letters on the cards that will be attached. If the letter object is to be made directly by hand, you will need HVS paper to make the letters. Start making letters using tools such as brushes, watercolors, markers, and colored pencils, or create a design using a computer that is the appropriate size on cardboard paper and then paste it when finished.

METHODOLOGY

In this research, researchers used quantitative research methods with the type of research being experimental research and with a group pretest-posttest research design from pre-experimental design.

This research was conducted at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah which is located on the Street of Medan - Binjai Km. 13.5 Pondok Miri Sei Semayang Village, Sunggal District, Deli Serdang Regency. This research was carried out in September of the 2021 / 2022 academic year.

The population in this study were all 15 children from group A at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan - Binjai KM .13.5. The sample used in this study was the same as the population, namely children from group A at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan - Binjai KM. 13.5 as many as 15 children.

The design in this research uses a one-group pretest-posttest design. The research procedure consists of the preparation stage, implementation stage,

and final stage. The data collection technique in this research is using observation techniques. Using observation techniques, observations will be made of children's language abilities in activities using letter card media. The research will be carried out using an observation sheet filled with checklist marks.

Based on the hypothesis, this research uses data analysis techniques, namely descriptive statistics and inferential statistics with non-parametric statistical techniques through the Wilcoxon Test. Before carrying out the Wilcoxon test, data analysis techniques are first carried out using descriptive statistics, namely to describe variable data on children's language abilities.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Description of Observation Results on Language Ability (literacy) of Children Aged 4 - 5 Years

Based on the explanation explained in Chapter III, the data collection technique in this study used observation techniques with a research design, namely one group pretest-posttest from a pre-experimental design with a total of 15 children. The required observation sheet has been arranged in such a way that it can be used to see the child's language (literacy) abilities.

The following are the results of observations of the language (literacy) abilities of children aged 4 - 5 years at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan - Binjai Km. 13.5 academic year 2021/2022:

a. Initial Observation Data (Pre-Test)

Based on data collection that had been carried out before the treatment (pre-test), the researchers conducted initial research on September 5 2022 which was carried out for 3 days in class A which consisted of an experimental group of 15 children. The pre-test is carried out to determine the child's initial state of language (literacy) abilities A child RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan - Binjai KM. 13.5. The pre-test activities were carried out by the class teacher by calling the children one by one to guess letters, play letter puzzles, match letters, and make a letter list book. Researchers observe by giving grades according to the child's ability to carry out activities determined by the teacher. The media used before the treatment was only writing on the blackboard and letter puzzles. When the children are called one by one for the initial assessment, the other children do the LKA.

Based on the research results, it can be concluded that from the results of calculating the initial conditions before the treatment (post-test) in the experimental group in children's language (literacy) abilities based on the four achievements of children's language (literacy) abilities, it was found that 9 children could not complete four achievements of children's language (literacy) abilities and it was found that only 6 children were able to complete some of the four achievements of children's language (literacy) abilities.

b. Implementation of Treatment

The next research process is the implementation of treatment. The treatment was only carried out for four days from 19 September 2022 to 22 September 2022. In this process, researchers and teachers worked together to carry out a design of activities that should be given to children to find out whether there is an influence of letter card media on language skills (literacy). An explanation of the activities when administering the experimental treatment takes place as follows:

1. First Day of Treatment

The first day of treatment was carried out on Monday 19 September 2022. On the first day of treatment activities, researchers stimulated children's ability to recognize and know vowels and consonants. Before the treatment activities were carried out, the researcher and class teacher instructed the children to sit in a circle and then explained to the children about the various shapes and sounds of letters. Then the researcher prepared the necessary media, namely letter card media.

In the first treatment, the teacher explains to the children that the activity that will be carried out today is playing a game of recognizing and guessing vowels and consonants using letter cards. The teacher also explains what is included in vowels and consonants. The teacher pronounces the letter symbols listed on the letter cards in turn and the children are asked to imitate them, then the letter cards are turned over and closed. Next, the children are invited to practice the letter card game together and take turns.

The first day of treatment made the children very enthusiastic and interested because the learning media this time used letter cards. Using letter card media is something new that is done in the learning process at the school. So the children were very enthusiastic about paying attention and playing the letter cards even though they were still under the direction of the teacher and researchers. This is normal because this treatment is still in its initial stages and requires several more stages. The activity of recognizing vowel and consonant language symbols (letters) ends by saying the language symbols (letters) listed on the letter cards.

2. Second Day of Treatment

The second day of activities (treatment) was carried out on Tuesday 20 September 2022. The second day of treatment activities was to stimulate children's cognitive abilities with a game of arranging letters. It is hoped that from the results of this second treatment, children will be able to differentiate between vowels and consonants. Before the treatment was carried out, the teacher directed the children to sit in a circle at the beginning of the activity. The teacher gave appreciation and recalled last night's activities.

Then in the second treatment activity, explain the activity to the children that the activity that will be carried out today is playing a game of arranging letters. The teacher models how to play arranging letters, then the children are asked to play arranging the letters in turn. This activity is carried out repeatedly until the child can distinguish the shapes of all the letters.

3. Third day of treatment

The third day of treatment was carried out on Wednesday 21 September 2022. The third day's treatment activity was to stimulate the ability to match letters. It is hoped that the results of the third day of treatment will be that the children will be able to match the letters represented in the 2 pictures shown. As usual, before the activity is carried out, the teacher directs the children to sit in a circle and provide appreciation activities and remember yesterday's activities.

On the third day of treatment, the teacher started by explaining to the children what activities would be carried out today, namely playing a letter- matching game using letter cards. This activity is done repeatedly with different cards. Then the children are asked to match the letters with the letter cards together and take turns.

4. Fourth day of treatment

The fourth day of treatment was carried out on Thursday 22 September 2022. The fourth day's treatment activity was to stimulate the children's ability to be able to draw simple objects in books that had the initial letters of the objects written on them. As usual, before the activity is carried out, the teacher directs the children to sit in a circle and the teacher gives appreciation as usual and sings the children's favorite songs so that the children are again enthusiastic about participating in the learning that will be given by the teacher

In the fourth treatment, the activities are not much different from the activities in the previous treatment,

namely starting with explaining to the children about the activities that will be carried out today, namely playing the letter list book game, then the researcher shows how to play the letter list book, then the children - Direct the child to play the letter list book game. This activity is carried out repeatedly until the child understands how to play with the letter list book

c. Observation Result Data After Giving Treatment (Post-test)

Data from the results of observational research after the treatment was given on September 19, 2022. So the results were obtained after the treatment was given to the experimental group using letter cards as media. The media used is letter card media. The implementation and collection of treatment (post-test) scores are carried out the same as taking pre-test scores, where children are tested one by one to carry out the test stages that have been prepared by the researcher.

The results of the scores from the post-test which were carried out from the observation process carried out by the researcher with the assistance of other teachers, were by the criteria and instruments that had been created by the researcher, then the results of the post-test were obtained, namely the final results of the experimental group in testing language skills (literacy) based on 4 child development achievements, from the four achievements, 9 children developed very well with a total score of 3 and 6 children whose abilities developed in line with expectations with a score of 2. So, the total score of the experimental group from the 4 development achievements after treatment is 159 and this situation has increased very rapidly from the total score previously only obtained.

After that, the Wilcoxon test was carried out, where $W_{count} 0$, $W_{table} (\alpha: 5\%, n: 15) = 25$. So $W_{count} < W_{table}$, the conclusion H_0 is rejected. There is a significant influence on the use of letter card media on the language (literacy) abilities of children aged 4 - 5 years at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah Medan - Binjai Km. 13.5 in the academic year 2021 / 2022.

DISCUSSION

Language skills (literacy) are one of the stages in honing a child's ability to read. When children can read and know each letter and its sound one by one, then they know syllables, then they know words and finally they become sentences.

In developing language (literacy) skills in children, media is needed that can be used by teachers to support the teaching and learning process at

school. One media that is quite relevant and easy to obtain for young children is letter card media.

Ratnawati's opinion (in Slamet Suyanto, 2012) reveals that letter card media which is applied through games, can stimulate children to recognize letters and letter sounds more quickly, making children's interest stronger in exploring in finding new vocabulary, by combining them. the letter card. Before carrying out research, it must be started by measuring and assessing the initial conditions of the research location to determine the initial state of language (literacy) abilities in children aged 4 - 5 years in class A RA TSAMANIATUN HASANAH, in terms of language (literacy) abilities including guessing letters, arranging letters, match letters, and recognize objects with letter prefixes.

The pre-test scores obtained show that the experimental group's language (literacy) abilities were based on the 4 achievement indicators above, 9 children were found who could not complete the 4 children's language (literacy) ability achievements and only 6 children were found who were able. complete some of the 4 achievements of children's language (literacy) abilities. So, the total score of the experimental group before treatment for the 4 developmental achievements was only around 65.

The next step is to apply treatment to the experimental group class. Treatment was carried out for 4 days, the first day's treatment activity was to stimulate the ability to recognize and guess vowels and consonants. The second day's treatment activity was to stimulate children's cognitive abilities with a letter puzzle game. The third day's treatment activity was to stimulate the ability to match letters. And the treatment activity on the fourth day is to stimulate the child's ability to be able to draw simple objects in a book where the initial letter of the object has been written.

The results of the post-test after the treatment showed that in the experimental group of the 4 child development achievements, 9 children developed very well with a score of 3, and 6 children developed according to expectations with a score of 2. The total score after the treatment of the 4 development achievements was 159. This situation has increased from the previous total score of only 65. From the explanation above, the time before the treatment (pre-test) and after the treatment (post-test) from the experimental group class, the results obtained are $W_h = 0$, and $W_t = 25$ with comparison conditions if $W \text{ count} < W \text{ table}$ then H_0 is rejected and H_a is accepted. So, the researchers concluded that the letter card media affected the language (literacy) abilities of children aged 4 - 5 years in class A at RA Tsamaniatun Hasanah.

Letter card media is an influential part of helping improve children's memory in remembering letter shapes because by using letter card media children are more interested and learning becomes less boring than just looking at the writing on the blackboard. Letter card media is media in the form of cards and then attached with letters of the alphabet which are used as learning aids by showing the shape of the letters. With the media of letter

cards, children can remember the shape of letters so it will be easier to improve children's language (literacy) skills.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

There is a significant influence of letter card media on the language (literacy) abilities of children aged 4-5 years, as evidenced by the difference in scores between before and after treatment. The total score before the treatment only reached 65, and after the treatment, the total score rose to 159.

Recommendations

Based on the research results and conclusions above, the researcher provides the following suggestions.

a. For Schools

It is hoped that teachers will be able to think innovatively and modernly in creating interesting learning media so that they can attract students' attention. Schools are expected to be able to provide or provide the facilities needed by teachers and students so that teachers can make the learning process more enjoyable.

b. For Other Research

It is recommended for further research to be more innovative in creating learning media to complete the missing parts in this research. The shortcomings of the research are that it only uses letter card media, only focuses on the five senses of sight, and lacks media which more innovative and modern.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

For advanced research, we hope that advanced researchers can research and use innovative and modern media in looking at and developing the literacy abilities of Children Aged 4 - 5 Years.

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