

# Implementation of Reggio Emilia Approach in the Mastery of Indonesian Language Vocabulary in Early Childhood in an Islamic School in Bandung

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**Abstract**—This study aims to improve the acquisition of Indonesian vocabulary in early childhood in an Islamic school, in Bandung. The focus of his research is on the implementation of the Reggio Emilia Approach (REA) to improve the mastery of Indonesian vocabulary in early childhood 5-6 years. This study used a descriptive qualitative method. The research was carried out using the REA approach. The results of the analysis showed that the children's mastery of vocabulary in the three months of research was more effective and the improvement was measurable, and the girls had larger vocabulary than the boys. Most female children mastered 146 Indonesian vocabularies compared to the male whose vocabulary mastery was only 130 vocabularies. In addition, the scope of the Indonesian vocabulary that is mastered is still largely at the level of objects, activities, circumstances, and other things that are concrete. In other words, the scope of the child's vocabulary in addition to dealing with everything that is concrete is also related to everything that can be felt and experienced by children. Based on the results of this study, it is recommended that there is support from a learning environment (school and home) that is conducive to stimulating children's language abilities.

**Keywords:** *early childhood, REA implementation, vocabulary mastery*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Early childhood is a group of individuals aged 0 - 8 years who are in a period of growth and development both physically and psychologically (Sujiono, 2009). Another opinion states that early childhood is children who are in the age range of 0-8 years, which are covered by educational programs in child care, family child care home, preschool education both private and public, kindergarten, and elementary school (NAEYC, 1992). Early childhood education is a philosophy that guides children's teaching and learning based on the theories that underlie what and how children learn, the curriculum, and experiences obtain by the children through education (Briggs, Morrison, & Coleman, 2012).

In language, early childhood (EC) has different characteristics from adults. Chomsky as quoted by Subyakto and Nababan (1992) states that every child from birth has been equipped with a set of equipment that allows him to acquire a language. This set of equipment is called the Language

Acquisition Device (LAD). With this LAD, a child is certain to have the natural ability to speak. Speaking is inseparable from the vocabulary. Vocabulary is all the words contained in a language (Soedjito, 1992). Vocabulary is an important part of the language. Vocabulary mastery can affect one's language skills. Likewise, the ability of someone to use and learn a language is influenced by the vocabulary they acquire. Language can function to someone if their language skills improve. A person's language skills increase when the quantity and quality of vocabulary increases (Tarigan, 1993).

Acquiring vocabulary in early childhood requires an appropriate method. According to Sujiono (2009), in general, the early childhood learning model is divided into two, namely the teacher-centered learning model initiated by LAN by Skinner and the child-centered model initiated by Piaget. Meanwhile, according to Briggs, Morrison, and Coleman (2012), there are many learning models/programs for early childhood, namely: childcare models, Highscope, Montessori models, Reggio Emilia, Waldof, and Head Start.

Parents are a vital component of Reggio's philosophy. Parents and teachers are seen as partners, collaborators, and supporters for their children. Parent teachers respect each child's first teacher and involve parents and the community in every aspect of the curriculum (Arifin, 2009).

In Reggio Emilia's approach, the teacher is seen as a fellow student and collaborator with the child and not only the instructor. Teachers are encouraged to facilitate children's learning by planning activities and lessons based on children's interests, asking questions to better understand, and actively engaging in activities with children, instead of sitting back and observing children's learning as a partner for children, the teacher is in a learning situation (Hewett, 2001). Reggio Emilia's learning model is able to provide service and guidance to young children who are ready to enter formal school to 1) understand others (themes or others) socially and express themselves through language; 2) understand and be able to follow simple learning through language; 3) developing phonological experience and alphabet knowledge; 4) add a vocabulary of meaningful basic words; 5) the basic concepts of addition to numeration/mathematics such as addition, number values, cohesiveness, grouping, matching, shape, and size; 6) familiarize themselves with daily routines such as: singing national songs, lessons, breaks, and others. Including,

interactions in the classroom such as greeting teachers, raising hands when asking or answering, taking turns in activities, group work, etc. in school.

Children tend to still have difficulty in understanding vocabularies either to speak, to express or sources of vocabulary that is heard due to lack of stimulation of language competency during the lesson through classroom play activities. This can be seen from the evaluations of some schools in terms of language comprehension, word change and acquisition from one semester to another have not changed significantly. For example, assessment data obtained from various issues raised by teachers at the national level. From several studies, such as the impact of media literacy on children's learning from films and hypermedia (Diergarten, Möckel, Nieding, & Ohler, 2016) it is argued that films also influence a child's literacy skills, and also a study indicates that maternal communication also influences the child's literacy through reading together (Deckner, Adamson & Bakeman, 2006), and the teacher's competency also influences the development of children's literacy, such as in the research of Early childhood educators' knowledge, beliefs, experiences and children's language, and literacy opportunity: What is the connection? (Schachter, Spear, Piasta, Justice, & Logan, 2016).

Based on these problems, this study was designed to describe the range of Indonesian vocabulary in preschoolers, Indonesian word classes mastered by preschoolers, and the scope of Indonesian vocabulary mastered by preschoolers.

## II. METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach. This approach is chosen because the data collected is vocabulary spoken by children aged 5-6 years. It is also chosen because this study uses social interaction as a way to obtain data from natural data sources. The data source of this research are children in Islamic school in Bandung, age 5-6 years. The implementation of Reggio Emilia approach in the school is carried out in the daily lesson by using curriculum designed based on the agreement between teacher and children and using not just the center approach because the children is not just free to choose their play activity prepared by the teacher who arranged the invitation (the arrangement of play activity) but the children is also provided with learning media just such as atelierista which consist mostly of loose parts and also some electronic media is provided. The success of these invitations is determined by the teacher's skill and competency in provoking (prompt phrases) to explore and stimulate the children's communication skills so that new vocabularies will emerge and continued with further provocation to see if the children understand the old and new vocabularies spoken in a sentence. The involvement of parents is also needed especially in the activities at home. Activities carried out also use the invitation method to stimulate and explore the vocabularies for children which will be seen in their competency in class. This research data is descriptive, meaning that the vocabulary that is the main data of this study is a source of description that describes the intricacies of mastering Indonesian vocabulary in children. Thus, the method in this study is a descriptive qualitative research method

The role of researchers in this study is as participant observers. The presence of researchers in the field is known by the research subjects. The researcher is also a key instrument whose role is to plan, implement, interpret, and summarize data. To maintain the validity of the data the researchers conducted close observations, consultations with mentors, and discussions with peers. Data analysis of this research was conducted qualitatively. Bogdan as quoted by Sugiyono (2015)

Data analysis activities of this study include data identification, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. Data identification activities are carried out with the help of a carefully designed, focused and detailed analysis table to make it easy to calculate the quantity of vocabulary and subsequent classification processes. At this identification stage, the researcher gives a name to the data in accordance with the word class and vocabulary scope. The next step is data presentation.

## III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### A. *Mastery of Indonesian Language Vocabulary in Children Ages 5-6 Years*

The results of the research indicate that interaction between teachers and children, children and children in school by implementing the Reggio Emilia approach promotes the children's mastery of vocabularies. Specifically, the implementation of Reggio Emilia approach is conducted in the lesson structure stage as follows: 1) Invitation stage where children plan the activity to be carried out and choose the space for the creative activity; 2) Atelierista Stage (Working Time), where children enter the atelierista space; find an interesting project to do, and start to work, play or solve problems according to their plan; find the freedom to express, cognitive, symbolic and communicate; ask for guidance and assistance from teacher if needed; 3) Provocation Stage where children talk about their experience and take turns talking.

The result of the implementation of the above lesson stage is the mastery of a variety of vocabulary of children age 5-6 years in the Islamic school in Bandung:

Studies by experts indicate that the vocabulary spoken by children varies. The child's vocabulary is also influenced by external factors besides himself. Families and teachers in schools also play a very dominant role. This is the involvement of parents and teachers in the Emilia Reggio approach being the dominant component in the acquisition of children's vocabulary (Arifin, 2009). Following this, the vocabulary of children aged 5-6 years in Islamic school at Bandung (Table I).

TABLE I. INDONESIAN VOCABULARY FOR CHILDREN AGES 5-6 YEARS

Subjek Penelitian	L/P	Usia	Kelas Kata										Jumlah
			N	V	Adj	Adv	Pro	Pre	Kon	Num	Int	Art	
Al	P	6th	51	29	8	8	4	3	3	4	-	-	110
Ha	P	5th	33	23	2	3	5	1	3	3	-	-	73
Eh	P	5th	71	31	14	8	9	1	2	9	1	-	146
Ai	P	6th	66	23	12	6	8	1	3	3	2	-	124
Ns	P	6th	68	28	8	12	9	2	5	1	2	-	135
Dv	L	6th	45	45	4	9	11	4	3	7	2	-	130
Vr	L	5th	33	28	5	7	8	2	2	4	1	-	90
Za	L	5th	15	16	1	4	5	3	1	-	-	-	46
Am	L	6th	17	6	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	-	28
Nr	L	6th	21	17	5	3	1	2	1	1	-	-	51

Note:

V	: verba	Adv	: adverbia	Int	: interjeksi	Num	: numeralia	Adj	: adjektiva
N	: nomina	Pre	: preposisi	Art	: artikula	Kon	: konjungsi	Pro	: pronomina

Based on the table, it can be seen that the quantity of Indonesian language vocabulary varies for each child. The quantity of the range of Indonesian vocabulary mastered by Al is 110 vocabulary, Ha 73 vocabulary, Eh 146 vocabulary, Ai 124 vocabulary, Ns 135 vocabulary, Dv 130 vocabulary, Vr 90 vocabulary, Za 46 vocabulary, Am 28 vocabulary, and Nr 51 vocabulary. In general, it can be said that girls have more vocabulary than boys. Based on the above table also, it is known that Eh has the most vocabulary (146). Meanwhile, Am has the least mastery of his vocabulary, (28).

In addition to the variety of vocabulary, word-class mastered by children also vary. At the age of 5-6 years, children have mastered words with categories of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, numerals, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjection. The ability of this child can be seen in the following Table II.

TABLE II. INDONESIAN WORD CLASS MASTERED BY CHILDREN AGES 5-6 YEARS

Subjek Penelitian	L/P	Usia	Kelas Kata																			
			N	V	Adj	Adv	Pro	Num	Pre	Kon	Int	Art										
Al	P	6th	N	-	V	-	Adj	-	Adv	-	Pro	-	Num	-	Pre	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Art	-
Ha	P	5th	N	-	V	-	Pro	-	Adv	-	Num	-	Kon	-	Adj	-	Pre	-	Int	-	Art	-
Eh	P	5th	N	-	V	-	Adj	-	Pro	-	Num	-	Adv	-	Kon	-	Pre	-	Int	-	Art	-
Ai	P	6th	N	-	V	-	Adj	-	Pro	-	Adv	-	Num	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Pre	-	Art	-
Ns	P	6th	N	-	V	-	Adv	-	Pro	-	Adj	-	Kon	-	Pre	-	Int	-	Num	-	Art	-
Dv	L	6th	N	-	N	-	Pro	-	Adv	-	Num	-	Pre	-	Adj	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Art	-
Vr	L	5th	V	-	V	-	Pro	-	Adv	-	Adj	-	Num	-	Pre	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Art	-
Za	L	5th	N	-	V	-	Pro	-	Adv	-	Pre	-	Adj	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Art	-	Num	-
Am	L	6th	N	-	V	-	Adj	-	Adv	-	Pro	-	Pre	-	Int	-	Art	-	Num	-	Kon	-
Nr	L	6th	N	-	V	-	Adj	-	Adv	-	Pre	-	Pro	-	Num	-	Kon	-	Int	-	Art	-

Note:

V	: verba	Adv	: adverbia	Int	: interjeksi	Num	: numeralia	Adj	: adjektiva
N	: nomina	Pre	: preposisi	Art	: artikula	Kon	: konjungsi	Pro	: pronomina

Based on Table II, it is known that the majority of children aged 5-6 years in Islamic School in Bandung City have mastered almost all classes of Indonesian words. Starting from the class of nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, pronouns, numerals, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjection. Of the ten preschool children studied, five of them have well mastered the nine-word classes in their speech. Four children mastered

eight-word classes in their speech while one child mastered six-word classes in their speech. From this study, it was also known that the articular word class was not found from the speech of the children studied.

Based on the variety and class of words, thirty scopes of Indonesian vocabulary was found. In general, the vocabulary referred to is objects, activities, circumstances, and other things that are concrete. In other words, it can be said that what the child is speaking is self-names, kinship, size, type of plants, condition, number, profession, approval and rejection, gender, activity, personal equipment, electronic goods, day names, types of fruits, types of colors, food and drinks, household furniture, universal objects, school supplies, types of toys, types of animals, body parts, transportation, types of vegetables, technology, religion, place, purpose, taste, and shape.

*B. Discussion*

According to the view of behaviorism, the child's ability to speak and understand a language is obtained through stimulation from their external environment (Chaer, 2003). Therefore a relationship can be drawn that the child's vocabulary development also depends on the external input received by the child. This is what causes differences in the quantity of Indonesian vocabulary in each child.

In this study, the quantity of the variety of Indonesian vocabulary mastered by each child varies. In five of the girls studied, the vocabulary mastered was in the range of 73-135 vocabulary. Meanwhile, in the five boys studied, the vocabulary mastered was in the range of 28 - 130 vocabulary. This varying quantity of vocabulary indicates that age, gender, and family environmental conditions are factors that are assumed to be the background of the occurrence of differences in the quantity of Indonesian vocabulary in preschool children.

Aspects of gender, affect vocabulary acquisition. The quantity of vocabulary mastered by girls is greater than that of boys. This shows that in verbal abilities girls are superior to boys. According to Santrock (2007) this condition states that girls are superior in some verbal areas such as the ability to find synonyms for words and verbal memory while boys outperform girls in quantitative and visual-spatial abilities. Santrock's view reinforces the results of this study, that girls are slightly better than boys in language.

With Reggio Emilia's approach, children who are accustomed to using Indonesian and Sundanese language to interact with parents, the majority of the quantity of Indonesian vocabulary variety that is mastered is greater than those children who are only accustomed to using Sundanese as a means of interacting with parents. This is of course also supported by a good communication relationship between parents, teachers, and children so that it has an impact on the quantity of Indonesian vocabulary that is mastered by children.

Subsequent data, the results of this study indicate that the noun word class is the most word mastered by children. This is consistent with Gentner's research which states that children master the most number of nouns than other word classes (Dardjowidjojo, 2010). The same result was also shown by Dardjowidjojo who for five years examined the acquisition of his grandchildren's language. This research indicates that nouns

occupy the top position with an average percentage of 49% and verbs rank second with an average percentage of 29%, then in the third sequence followed by adjective words with a percentage of 13%, and function words occupy the fourth with a percentage of 10% (Dardjowidjojo, 2010).

An explanation of the vocabulary mastery of children aged 5-6 years based on the word class, can be seen in Table III.

TABLE III.

WORD CLASS DESCRIPTION OF INDONESIAN LANGUAGE  
MASTERED BY CHILDREN AGE 5-6 YEARS

Vocabulary	Explanation
Noun	Children aged 5-6 years at An Islamic School, Bandung in general already know the names of various objects in their surroundings. The objects that are known to children, in general, are concrete or real. In addition, these objects are often found in the children's daily life so that children are easier to remember the names of these objects. Therefore, the noun category is mostly dominated by children.
Verb	In general, verbs mastered by children aged 5-6 years in An Islamic School at Bandung are related to daily activities or actions taken by children. The vocabulary includes getting up, reading, cooking, sleeping, bathing, drinking, eating, going home, working, buying, and running. The vocabulary includes basic form verbs. Basic forms of verbs have an independent meaning.
Adjective ( <i>Adjektiva</i> )	Vocabulary related to adjectives in children aged 5-6 years in An Islamic School in Bandung, among others are beautiful, sick, evil, naughty, forgetful, far, near, shocked, healthy, smart, afraid, good, straight, small pieces and so on. Vocabulary beautiful, sick, evil, healthy, smart, afraid, naughty, and shocked, including basic forms of adjectives. In accordance with the characteristics of adjectives, the vocabulary has the potential to join no, more, or very particles. Meanwhile, small words are included in the category of derivatives derived from the process of repetition or reduplication.
Adverb	The vocabulary related to the adverb category in the children's speech is already, will, again, still, ever, never, can, want, already, cannot, dawn, evening, evening, and sometimes. Adverb basic form as already, will, again, still, ever, not, can, want while the combined adverb as already and cannot. Early in the morning, late afternoon, late at night, and sometimes including forms of adverb reduplication.
Pronoun	Based on the results of research on children aged 5-6 years in An Islamic School in Bandung, there are several pronouns used by children in communication, including personal pronouns, possessives, demonstration, and interrogation. I is a singular personal pronoun while he is the third person singular pronoun. Then we are plural first person pronouns and you are plural second person pronoun. In addition,

Vocabulary	Explanation
	there are also possessive pronouns as in <i>adikku, mobilnya</i> . Possessive pronouns are all words that replace the pronouns of people as owners. So <i>-ku, -mu, -nya</i> are concise forms that are placed behind a word commonly called enclitic.
Number	In the numeral class, a number of vocabularies are found as follows five, two, four, ten, seven, three, one million, two million, five million, second, one, six, twelve and half. The vocabulary is many and all included in the category of indeterminate principal numeralia. It is said to be indeterminate because it refers to an uncertain amount. Meanwhile, vocabulary five, one, two, six, seven, three, ten, twelve, one million, two million, and five million, including the category of principal numeralia, of course. However, for the vocabulary of one million, two million and five million in the main numeralia certainly occupies the position as a million component group.
Preposition	Pre-schoolers have mastered several prepositions in a speech. Among these prepositions are in, to and from. The prepositions in, to and from are single prepositions of the basic form. For prepositions of derivatives of combined forms and prepositions from other categories not found from the child's speech description. This is because the vocabulary mastered by pre-schoolers is still limited and most are in the basic form.
Conjunction	Children aged 5-6 years in An Islamic School in Bandung City have mastered several conjunctions in speech. In children's speech, the vocabulary associated with the conjunction category is and, if, but. The words but, if, and is a form of inter-sentence conjunction category. Inter sentence conjunctions are conjunctions that connect word units with words, phrases with phrases, or clauses with clauses.
Interjection	Interjection or interjection is a task word that expresses the speaker's heart. To strengthen feelings such as awe, wonder, and other inner expressions people use certain words in addition to sentences that contain the intended primary meaning. In this category, there are a number of words such as <i>eh, loh, ah, ouch, and wow</i> .

#### IV. CONCLUSION

In preschool children, the scope of Indonesian vocabulary that is mastered is still largely at the level of objects, activities, circumstances, and other concrete objects. Vocabulary related to daily activities such as eating, drinking, sleeping, bathing, learning, playing and so on is one example of concrete ideas that often come out of children's speech. Likewise, with names within the scope of kinship such as father/father, mother, brother, sister, and so on.

However, this does not mean that children have not mastered abstract ideas fully. Children have mastered abstract ideas such as difficult, happy, affectionate and so on which are within the scope of the situation, it's just that for higher abstract

vocabulary concepts, children are not able to understand them well. It can be known when there are children who ask the researchers about the concept of a polite word, permission, worship, soaked when interacting in the field.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the scope of the child's vocabulary in addition to dealing with everything that is concrete is also related to everything that can be felt and experienced by children. This is in line with Dale's opinion which states that children's vocabulary is only limited by their experiences and by available models (Tarigan, 1993).

Hence, if the environment is able to provide a lot of experience to children, it is possible that the scope of the child's vocabulary will be even broader. This is because children interpret words based on past experiences. Everything that children have seen, heard, felt, and done in the past will enrich the scope of children's vocabulary.

The Reggio Emilia approach is applied in learning and the teacher works closely with researchers to improve strategies in the learning process to improve the acquisition of children's vocabulary and explore language skills based on the surrounding environment. From this discussion, it can be concluded that the application of the Reggio Emilia approach can be used to improve children's language vocabulary mastery. This further emphasizes that this approach is committed to creating learning conditions that will encourage and facilitate children to build their own thinking power through the incorporation of all expressive, communicative, and cognitive languages (Forman, 1993).

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