

Emergent Literacy in Early Childhood

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ABSTRACT

Children start to learn languages from the day they were born. As they grow and develop, their speaking and language skills become complex increasingly. They learn to understand and use language to express ideas, thoughts, feelings, and to communicate with others. During developing speaking and language at the beginning, children learn skills that are important for literacy development (reading and writing). This stage is known as emergent literacy, which starts from birth and continues through the preschool years. Children take a look and interact with print media such as books or magazines long before they start elementary school. Parents can appreciate their children when they begin to recognizing rhyming words, scribbling on crayons, mentioning a few alphabet letters, or pretending to write. Gradually, children combine what they know about speaking and listening to what they know from the results of interactions with the print media to be ready to learn reading and writing.

Keywords: Language, emergent literacy, early childhood.

1. INTRODUCTION

Literacy is a skill that is very important in a children development process. The importance of literacy as the foundation of the earliest on science and technology [1]. Literacy is the basis of life skills to analyse and criticize various phenomena. Literacy is the teaching of reading and writing [2], literacy is the ability to read and write [3], or what is known as literacy. Furthermore, literacy is understanding, involving, using, analysing and transforming text [4].

Literacy skills in children are closely related to reading and writing skills. Language learning for early childhood is directed at the ability to communicate, either verbally or in writing or symbolically [5]. To understand symbolic language, one child needs to learn to read, the stages of children's reading skills [6], namely the growth stage of readiness to read, early stages of learning to read, the stage of developing reading skills, and the stage of refining reading skills. Furthermore, the ability to communicate orally or in writing such as the ability to read and write is a basic skill that everyone must have [4].

Early literacy skills of children can be predicted at moderate to high levels [7]. Currently the literacy skills of children in Indonesia fell and is still relatively low [8]. Indonesia is in 72nd position out of a total of 78 countries based on data obtained from the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) on literacy levels in world countries. If the literacy culture in Indonesia is not developed, this nation will receive

consequences such as cyber fraud, cybercrime increases, easier access to pornography, what often happens is that fake news or hoaxes can easily spread.

The concept of early literacy or emergent literacy has been gradually replacing the concept of reading readiness, emergent literacy is used to explain children's knowledge of reading skills and write before they actually learn to read and write words [9]. In the field of literacy, emergent literacy provides a new definition so that educators, teachers and parents are aware that reading readiness in children no longer describes what happens in early childhood literacy development [9].

There are 2 domains of emergent literacy, namely Outside-In and Inside-Out. The term Outside-In is an understanding of the context of the writing that you want to read or write about. The Inside-out process is a representation of children's understanding of the rules that underlie the written language that is read according to the defined sound, whereas the Outside-in process involves a children understanding of the story's content.

In the inside-out process, such as the decoding aspect of reading, children must be able to break the 'symbols or codes' that are commonly used for reading. This process includes the children's knowledge and understanding of letters and sounds, the relationship between the letter and its sound, grammar and pronunciation, and cognitive strategies a child must master is to be able to read correctly. There are several methods used to teach the ability to form an inside-out process such as activities

related to phonological awareness, alphabet knowledge of teaching and activities that have to do with the writing language [10].

The outside-in process represents children's knowledge of the world around them, knowledge of meaning or meaning and knowledge related to the context in written language. The outside-in process will allow children to understand the concept of sentences and the context in which these concepts can occur. Some of the ways that can be done to smooth the process include creating an environment where language often functions and literacy, including an environment that accustoms the use of writing in activities, interactions between children and adults, and the development of activities that include reading books together [10].

The introduction of literacy to children can be started from an early age, for early childhood, literacy is the process of knowing information through learning experiences with the surrounding environment [11]. In this age range, the role of the family is also very dominant in determining the level of success of a child's education. The success of early childhood education requires family support and involvement in school activities [12]. Parents have a role in the development of early childhood, so parents in this case must maximize their role as educators, caregivers, motivators and models [13]. So that the role of parents has a very big influence on children's success in learning, stimulation provided by parents and the environment will support children's literacy skills.

After seeing the description above, literacy is the basis for a life skill. By cultivating literacy can be a basic capital to analyse and criticize various phenomena that occur. For early childhood literacy is something children know about reading and writing before they actually learn to read and write.

2. CHILDREN LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

Language is a tool to communicate, through human language can interact and communicate to express their opinions and express their feelings. Children learn languages through a good environment at home with their families and parents, in school with teachers and friends and in society. Language includes speaking, listening, writing and reading skills. Meanwhile, language is the possibility of children translating their experiences into symbols that can be used to communicate and think [14].

A person does not suddenly have a direct grammar skill to speak. A child acquires language by several stages, of each subsequent stage of the language is closer to the grammar of adults. Naturally, children will recognize language by communicating with the people around them. The first language children know is usually their mother tongue [15]. First language acquisition in the

research is divided into four periods [15]. The first is the preliminary stage which is marked by three types of behaviour, namely reading, imitating, and initial understanding. Second, the first period (1-1.6 years) at this stage, children can listen to or acquire words or phrases without understanding the meaning of a word or phrase. Third, the second period (1.6-2.0) at this stage the children have started to recognize and begin to understand the meaning of a word or sentence. Fourth, period (2.0-2.6) at this stage, children begin to be able to pronounce or express words or sentences well. This means that at this stage the children's vocabulary is already a lot.

3. EMERGENT LITERACY

Literacy is one of the language development programs in early childhood. The emergence of literacy in children is a process of developing awareness about reading and writing before they can actually read or write [16]. Early literacy or emergent literacy is a formation of literacy skills that are known early before school children [17]. Furthermore emergent literacy includes knowledge and abilities related to recognizing the alphabet, phonological awareness, representative symbol and communication. From the description, it can be concluded that emergent literacy skills are the ability of knowledge and skills that form the basis of reading and writing skills which include the introduction of the alphabet, phonological awareness (sound of letters), and awareness of writing.

Emergent literacy ability is the capacity to name letters and write them down, spelling simple words, recognizing letters and signs around, identify books and titles and carry out activities related to books [17]. Every expression of a child from infancy, his babbling, his expression of books, his fascination with pictures, his interactions with writing, everything is seen as a form of children's emergent literacy learning. The emergent of literacy in children occurs as a development of awareness and readiness of children in reading and writing activities before children are able to read and write correctly, in the process, the readiness of children and parents to be consistent when introducing and learning literacy [18].

Vygotsky argues that developing children's cognitive through social interaction [19]. A child will interact with peers, parents and teachers, with this interaction will result in learning that contributes to the intellectual development of children. The basic assumption of Vygotsky's theory of social constructivism is "What the child can do in cooperation today he can do alone tomorrow" [19]. What children do or learn today by working together can be done independently in the future.

In fostering interest in early literacy in children, parents have a dominant role, stimulation has been given by the parents and the environment will support their

literacy skills [20]. The success of the literacy stimulation process can be influenced by several factors [21], one of which is environmental factors such as children's backgrounds and experiences at home, as well as family social and economic status. The role of parents as modelling, mentoring, organizing and teaching will greatly affect the way of life of children. Emergent literacy skills can be improved by providing stimulation in the form of literacy activities that are interesting and fun for children. With activities such as reading books regularly, telling stories, singing, roles playing can foster children's literacy skills and interests.

4. EMERGENT LITERACY'S STAGES

Children's reading development takes place in several stages [22]. First the fantasy stage, this stage the children begin to learn to use books, see and turn the sheets of books or bring their favourite book. Second, the stage of self-concept formation, where the children begin to see himself as a "reader" where the children's involvement is seen in reading activities, pretending to read a book, interpret the image based on previous experience gained, and use standard language that is not in accordance with the writing. The three stages of reading pictures, this stage in the children begin to grow awareness of writing in books and find words that have never been met before, and can express words that are meaningful and related to him, already familiar with written words of poetry, songs, and already familiar with the alphabet. The fourth stage is the introduction of reading, the children begin to use three sign systems (graph phonic, semantic, and syntactic). Children begin to be interested in reading, can remember writing in a certain context, trying to recognize signs in the environment, as well as reading various signs such as on billboards, milk boxes, toothpaste and others. And the five stages of fluent reading, this stage children can read various types of books.

Furthermore, children at 2-5 years old have been able to show their literacy skills quite rapidly [23]. At 0-3 years old, they should be able to recognize books through pictures, write the alphabets, listen to stories, and pretend to read. Then, the children at 3-4 years old have been able to recognize the simple handwriting, recognize sounds of different languages, connect the stories in the book with reality, and are interested to read the books. The children at 5 years old should be able to predict the storyline in the book and be able to write their names and words with spelling.

The steps used to see emergent literacy in children. As children are asked to draw and then write words and then read out what they have written [24]. By looking at the writing, you can see the language spelling or the sound image of the language in the form of writing or symbols written by the children. Meanwhile, reading can see the extent to which children can relate phonologically appropriate sounds to what they write.

5. CONCLUSION

From the discussion above, it can be concluded that initial literacy is a concept to support reading learning, the child's ability to recognize the alphabet and the ability to read and write, or what is called literacy. Basically, the development of literacy has started when the children in the womb first started hearing the story spoken by the mother and naturally the children will recognize the language by communicating with the people around him like a baby by babbling.

Emergent literacy development is a process that precedes reading and writing activities which are widely understood as conventional reading behaviour. In other words, emergent literacy is not the actual reading and writing activity. Emergent literacy is part of language activities that need to be taught to children from an early age. Emergent literacy is an ability or knowledge of reading and writing to prepare children for the next level. Emergent literacy skills can be improved by providing stimulation in the form of literacy activities that are interesting and fun for children, with activities such as reading books regularly, telling stories, singing, role playing can foster children's literacy skills and interest.

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