

Literacy Theories of Children's Language Development

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ABSTRACT

This study discusses the theory of literacy on children's language development. The purpose of this study is to carry out a number of steps to prepare an initial data or material as a basis which can then be utilized by various parties interested in studies related to the literacy of early childhood language development. This research uses the type of research in the form of literature studies. The results of this study examine the basis of literacy for children, how to develop literacy in children, and the impact of literacy on children's language development. Researchers hope that the results of this study can be useful to help facilitate the community, especially for other researchers, parents, and teachers in reading, exploring, and understanding the literacy of early childhood language development.

Keywords: *Literacy, language development, early childhood.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading and writing activities become very crucial when associated with a nation's intelligence benchmarks. This is reinforced by the opinion from Damayantie [1] that the high culture of reading and writing is one indicator of an intelligent nation. Responding to this, in reality Indonesia is still low in terms of literacy. UNESCO states that Indonesia ranks second from the bottom with regard to literacy in the world, meaning that interest in reading in Indonesia is very low [2]. Indonesian people's awareness of this is still low that literacy culture is important and needs to be preserved in daily life.

Literacy becomes a very important thing needed in life to obtain and provide information for anyone. No exception for early childhood. Since babies indirectly children are already familiar with literacy activities such as talking. The child begins to mumble when he is invited to speak by parents and people around the child. At that time the child tries to interact with people around him.

Often people who can read and write are called literacy, while people who cannot read and write are called illiterates or illiterates. A person can be said as a literate if he is able to understand something that is caused because he reads the right information and does something based on his understanding of the contents of the reading [3]. Therefore, a high level of concentration is needed when doing literacy in order to understand what is being read so that it can do something based on its

understanding. Likewise, with early childhood, development of literacy related to media and methods will be given to children so that children are interested in literacy so that children can concentrate highly when doing so.

The success of an activity given to the child is when the child can recount what he has done. This indicates that the child has a deep impression after carrying out these activities. Therefore, children are interested in doing literacy activities to have an awareness of literacy until they grow up so that the impression that literacy is fun is needed for children. Based on the Pradipta's research results [4], 45.1% of parents chose fairy tale books as the books most often given to children. Apart from fairy tale books, there were several books that the respondents liked, including: 22.1% of parents preferred reading children's tabloids. 13.3% of respondents like encyclopaedias, and 7.1% of respondents prefer to give scientific stories when doing reading activities. This proves that children like to read with various types of reading.

The purpose of this study is to carry out a number of steps to prepare an initial data or material as a basis which can then be utilized by various parties interested in studies related to the literacy of early childhood language development. Researchers hope that the results of this study can be useful to help facilitate the community, especially for other researchers, parents, and teachers in reading, exploring, and understanding the literacy of early childhood language development.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literally the Latin literacy is *littera* (letters). Whereas in terms, literacy is literacy or literacy-related matters such as writing and reading. Literacy has very important goals for every individual in solving problems. Literacy is generally defined as a person's ability to read and write and use spoken language in communication [5]. This is reinforced by the UNESCO declaration [6] states that literacy is related to the ability to identify, determine, find, evaluate, create effectively and be organized, use and communicate information to overcome various problems.

According to Sari [7] literacy is a person's language ability (listening, speaking, reading and writing) to communicate in different ways according to their purpose. Related to one's language skills, Biddle [8] says that the language arts curriculum component consists of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

2.1. Listening

The National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) has identified four types of hearing:

- 1) Marginal listening: When someone is doing an activity and only hear a little what is said or something is happening.
- 2) Appreciative listening: When someone is listening to entertainment or something fun and develops an attitude of appreciation for what is being heard.
- 3) Attentive listening: When someone is listening carefully and attentively to get some information.
- 4) Analytical listening: When someone is listening to a conversation to understand and analyse how and what happens or is said it will affect their own situation.

2.2. Talking

According to Elpia [9] talking is an initial ability that children must have in order to communicate well. Someone needs to learn that the way they talk depends on the situation. Informal or non-standard speaking is done with friends and family, but more formal or standard speaking is more appropriate in more general environments such as workplaces, schools, and other public places.

2.3. Reading

A person develops the ability to read various reading materials that are increasingly difficult for him to obtain and interpret information, follow directions, find material, and obtain pleasure and enjoyment. According

to Basyiroh [10] the process experienced in reading is to try to represent and interpret an activity starting from the introduction of letters, words, expressions, phrases, sentences and discourse and relate it to sound and meaning.

2.4. Writing

Someone develops the ability to write in increasingly complex and appropriate ways to show a work, share information, ask for something, as well as for fun and entertainment. The first step in natural mastery of writing is when children make pictures and scribbles that are close together on one side and only circles or lines at the corner then they pretend to read the scribbles [10].

Literacy culture needs to be formed so that someone has literacy awareness. This can be started from the smallest scope of the family. The indicators used to measure achievement of literacy in the family according to Saryono [6] are as follows:

- 1) The amount and variety of reading material the family has.
- 2) The frequency of reading in the family every day.
- 3) Number of readings read by family members.
- 4) Number of writings by family members (memos, greeting cards, both printed and electronic, diaries in books or blogs, articles, short stories, or other literary works).
- 5) The amount of literacy training that is applicable and has an impact on families.

3. DISCUSSION

Researchers provide a limitation of the discussion because the discussion of literacy on the development of children's language can be a lot of subjects. The subject matter is the basics of literacy for children, how to develop literacy in children, and the impact of literacy on children's language development. Based on the previous presentation in the introduction that the researchers hope this research can be a starting point for other researchers in conducting research on children's language development, especially in early childhood.

3.1. Basic of Literacy for Children

Everyone has the capacity to talk, listen, write and think. All of these are elements of literacy [8]. Unlike speaking and listening that can proceed naturally, reading and writing are skills that must be taught early on. Rohde [5] states that it is very important to ensure that children need to acquire the skills and early awareness they need to become successful readers and writers. In addition, Arsa [11] explained that literacy at the level of early

childhood, namely the absorption of information through what is felt through the child's five senses, to then be used as initial knowledge for them.

Unwittingly, a child has begun to develop literacy skills from birth. According to Biddle [8] related to spoken or expressive language, babies start hissing (cooing) around the age of 6 to 8 weeks. Then, around the age of 4 to 6 months, most babies will start babbling. Then, their ravings began to have a tone of speech. At around 1 year of age, most children already use single words and / or develop two- to three-word utterances.

3.2. How to Develop Literacy in Children

Create the literacy environment: Language development and literacy awareness have begun at birth. During the first 1000 days of a child's life, the child's brain develops very rapidly and acquiring verbal language skills becomes very important for the child. This is the reason that exposure to a literacy environment full of books and spoken and written languages is very important.

Creating a literacy environment can be done with a variety of media and methods that are fun for children such as inviting children to be active in communication, reading stories to children with a variety of media, providing media that can improve literacy, such as books, pictures, educational games and videos. In addition, provide many variations of reading and stationery for children so that children are interested in exploring literacy activities.

Parents need to provide appropriate materials and support the child in building knowledge about writing and gradually the child can become more literate. Therefore, parents need to help children by involving children in an environment that is rich in books and provide guidance during the child's development process so that children grow up to be good readers and writers.

Set the literacy schedule: Parents need to develop daily literacy routines in children. At least one day there is a joint literacy activity in the family. Parents can ask children about what they have done in one day that aims to stimulate children to tell stories, then parents can also read stories before the child sleeps. This can be used as a literacy routine done before the child sleeps.

Besides aiming to train children's awareness of literacy activities, attachment between parents and children can also be well established. The frequency of reading in the family every day is one indicator used to measure the achievement of literacy in the family [6].

Use the concept of emergent literacy: Emergent literacy is a concept that supports learning to read and write when a child is in the process of being literate [12]. Meanwhile, according to Fajriyah [5] emergent literacy is used to show that language acquisition should be

conceptualized as a series of developments. In line with this understanding, according to Biddle [8] Emergent literacy is an early literacy development. Emergent literacy behaviour is the basis for children's spoken language and their knowledge of written language. An example of emergent literacy behaviour is when a child tries to carry out literacy activities but is still not correct as such:

- 1) The child is developing the ability to read various reading materials can be seen when the child likes reading a book but the book he is holding is still upside down.
- 2) The child is developing the ability to write in increasingly complex ways such as making marks on paper that can be seen when the child seems to write even though the child is making scribbles. Children's first discoveries are often about their own names.
- 3) The child is developing the ability to speak clearly, correctly, and clearly can be seen when the child makes sounds with various intonations as if he was speaking.

3.3. The Impact of Literacy on Children's Language Development

Instilling literacy awareness through fun ways in children can stimulate children's language development. When a child is 6 months old, parents can start instilling literacy awareness by holding the child while reading a picture story book. At that moment, according to Biddle [8] the child will first develop concepts about books and writing; Then phonemic awareness grows and acquisition of phoneme-graphemic knowledge (alphabet); Then the child builds a relationship between the writing and voice of the parent's speech when telling stories; Finally, children begin to develop oral language skills that can support their language development. This is reinforced by Subiyantoro's opinion [13] the introduction of children's literacy culture basically he will internalize the system of rules relating to sound and meaning specifically and children gain literacy abilities in a very amazing way.

Not only that, a child can learn to read and write quickly through the meaning of the pictures in the book. First the children visualize the pictures in the book in their memories. Then connect these images with their own experiences. Then they ask themselves whether the images and experiences make sense. After that the child looks at the word or sentence in the book and realizes that it represents the message spoken. Finally, the child understands that each word consists of letters and these letters appear in a certain order.

Children engage in emergent behaviour when participating in literacy-related events such as being in a

reading park. Children will explore literacy skills by using their oral language competencies. Children will engage in literacy behaviour such as participating in various books, looking at pictures in books, trying to read, trying to write, and when they read what they write.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on the literature study above, it can be concluded that the basic literacy for children is that children have started to develop literacy skills from birth. Babies start hissing (cooing) around the age of 6 to 8 weeks. Then, around the age of 4 to 6 months, most babies will start babbling. Then, their ravings began to have a tone of speech. At around 1 year of age, most children already use single words and / or develop two- to three-word utterances. With the basic literacy of children from birth, parents need to help children by involving children in a rich environment of books and provide guidance during the child's development process so that children grow into good readers and writers. In addition, parents also need to develop daily reading routines with children so that it can form emergent literacy behaviour in children.

The development of literacy, especially oral language competence, is a major achievement during the preschool years for children. The child will become relatively fluent in language during the first 6 years, unless there is a developmental delay, cognitive impairment, or physical speech impediment in the child. The ability to use language to communicate can affect children's learning and social interaction for children in daily life. The ability to understand spoken language gives children a basis for developing reading and writing skills later on.

Suggestions from this research are high expectations that further research can be continued with action in accordance with the theory of the research object, namely early childhood related literacy to children's language development.

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