

Profiling Early Childhood Teachers' Skills in Designing Musical and Song Learning Activities

Leli Kurniawati^{1,*} Yudi Sukmayadi² Hany Handayani³

¹ *Early Childhood Education Study Program, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia*

² *Faculty of Arts Education and Design, Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia, Bandung, Indonesia*

³ *Primary Education Study Program, STKIP Purwakarta, Purwakarta, Indonesia*

*Corresponding author. Email: lelikurniawati@upi.edu

ABSTRACT

This study investigates early childhood teachers' skills in designing musical kinaesthetic and song learning activities in Lembang District, Western Bandung Regency. It is a qualitative with non-hypothetical research involving 25 early childhood teachers selected from some schools. Data were collected from document analysis and semi-structured interview with the teachers. Based on the data analysis results, it was found that the teachers were in the average level as indicated from their daily lesson plan obtained mean score 62. However, 10 out of 25 lesson plans referred to have similar formats. This statement is strengthened by the interview results showing that the teachers faced some challenges in designing their daily lesson plans as they rarely joined professional development programs. As a result, some teachers did not develop their daily lesson plans whereas some others merely downloaded it from the internet or copied from other schools. Therefore, the teachers are required to get further trainings particularly related to designing musical kinaesthetic and song learning activities.

Keywords: *Kinaesthetic, Music, Song, Learning planning.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, running an Early Childhood Education (PAUD) program is viewed as an essential one to care of children's life. It is denoted by increasing numbers of non-governmental early childhood institutions in rural areas which bring either benefits or drawbacks. This fact happened due to an unequal distribution number of qualified teachers both for the urban and rural areas.

Moreover, this notion is further assumed by the society who claim that early childhood teachers simply possess singing skills yet neglect some pedagogical aspects in performing their job. In fact, they did not realize that singing and clapping hands in teaching to young children need to apply certain approaches based on the students' characteristics. Instead of those aspects, the society also underline that most teachers were not graduated from early childhood institutions, but they came different educational backgrounds. It was referred to the findings of some studies revealing that early childhood teachers only obtained junior secondary education degree with a strong motivation to teach and being underpaid [1,2].

The inappropriate of teachers' educational background is opposite to the concept of learning that aims to provide knowledge, competence, and skills for everyone to improve their lives standard. It is primarily not only a knowledge transfer but also a professional activity that demands teachers to integrate their basic teaching abilities and create a suitable learning environment [3,4].

Regarding teaching practices, the roles of teachers cannot be secluded from their responsibility to educate, teach, and guide students to achieve the formulated goals. Ideally, a teacher should be able to manage all aspects of learning, namely determining learning objectives or competencies, delivering learning materials, implementing certain techniques, designing media and resources, constructing assessment instruments, and providing appropriate learning environment [1,2,5]. Consequently, teachers are suggested to comprehensively understand these aspects guiding to reach the targeted learning objectives.

In addition, professional teachers may exhibit more than their ability to discern learning materials presented to the students, therewith, they need to have supported

competencies and skills. To be more detailed, there are several competencies listed in the point (d) of the Standard for Educators and Education personnel regulated in the Government Regulation Number 19 of 2005 concerning National Educational Standards, such as (1) pedagogical competence; (2) personality competence; (3) professional competence; and (4) social competence [1,4,6,7].

Those four competencies play important roles for the teachers to conduct their professional practices as stated in Law Number 14 of 2005 about Teachers and Lecturers in Article 1 verse 10 mentioning that a competence is a collection of required cognitive, psychomotor, and affective [8].

Regarding with the requirements, all teachers should achieve certain standards including pedagogical competence. This competence attaches to all teaching-related professions, including early childhood teachers. They should thoroughly understand some skills required in planning the lesson [1-3]. Some teachers were not fully aware yet of how to plan a good lesson to meet learning objectives. Moreover, to train the early childhood development, an early childhood teacher should design musical, kinaesthetic, and song-based learning activities [4].

The aforementioned learning activities involve children to singing while moving their body. The motion should have a meaning and describes a learning topic presented in learning activity [4,9,10]. Therefore, the teachers are requested to put the activities matching to the learning objectives.

From the background of the study explained above, it captures the profile of early childhood teachers in designing kinaesthetic and song-based learning activities.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study is qualitative research with non-hypothesis since it entails a series of complex procedures to explore in detail about participants' experiences in an event. It also employed a qualitative approach to analyse the collected data dealing with answering the formulated research questions [11,12]. As research participants, this study involved 25 early childhood teachers in Lembang District, Western Bandung Regency.

Data were acquired through documentation studies focusing on the daily lesson plan made by the teachers and semi-structured interview to confirm the information obtained previously. The collected data were then analysed through several stages, such as reducing data, displaying data, and drawing conclusions (data verification) as suggested by Miles and Huberman [12].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A good teacher should have some competencies [1-3,5] including the ability to design learning activities. This study assessed the teachers' competencies and skills in designing their daily lesson plan focusing on music and kinaesthetically learning.

The research was conducted in Lembang District, Western Bandung Regency by engaging 25 early childhood teachers who got teaching experience for 1 to 5 years, and 78% of them were senior high school graduates.

Furthermore, the study was conducted on site by preparing some requirements and following health protocols, namely gathering the participants in a large auditorium, keeping distances among the participants, washing hands regularly, checking body temperature, and strictly reminding the participants to keep wearing their two-layered mask.

Once they had followed the protocols, each respondent filled out an attendance list and sat in the designated place. Then, the researchers explained some guidelines regarding the process of research as well as their willingness to voluntarily joining the study. Next, the researchers asked the teachers to hand in their self-made daily lesson plans related to learning activities.

When they have submitted their lesson plan, the teachers' skills and competencies were assessed by using Performance Test (UKIN) worksheets. Based on the analysis results of the lesson plan, it was found that the average score of the teacher was 6.21 - classified as sufficient. To be more detailed, the data can be seen in Figure 1 below:

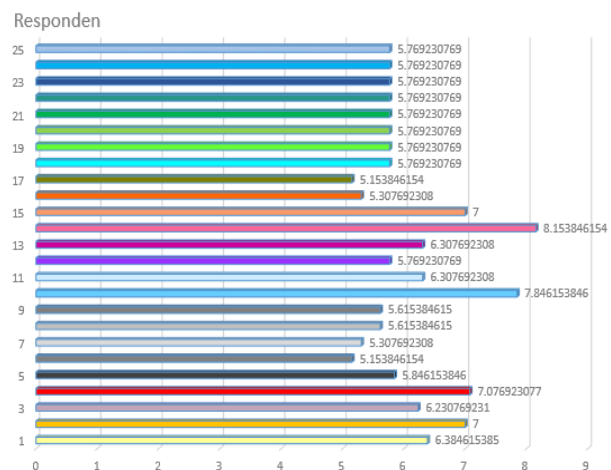


Figure 1 Early childhood teachers' skills in designing musical kinaesthetic and song learning activities in Lembang district.

The findings above show that the majority of early childhood teachers in Lembang have good pedagogical

skills as indicated from their ability in designing learning activities.

However, 10 out of 25 respondents or those who were coming from 15 schools displayed similar formats of lesson plan. In the interview, the teachers acclaimed that they rarely made daily lesson plans and preferred to download from the internet or adopt to the other teachers' lesson plans. The results of the interview also demonstrated that their incapability in designing lesson plan was due to the lack of their participations in professional development programs. Another supporting factor relayed to this issue was the teachers' educational backgrounds in which they were senior high school graduates with several years of experience in teaching young children [2,3,5].

Additionally, the teachers' skill in developing curriculum is highly determining factor in learning improvement. According to the Curriculum 2013, the teachers should be able to arrange a lesson focusing on students' processing skills. Hence, they are recommended to demonstrate the national character as a part of their basic skills. Those who designed the syllabus and daily lesson plan based on school policy ended up with materials which were oriented in government policies and their school settings [2,3,5,7].

To fulfil these demands, the teachers' skills in designing curriculum/syllabus seemed to be improved. This is in line with the idea of [13,14] highlighting that teachers' skills and competencies in developing curriculum/syllabus based on the students' needs is critical to create an effective and joyful learning.

4. CONCLUSION

Considering the findings of this study, it is concluded that early childhood teachers' skills and competences seemed to be sufficient. It can be seen from the fact that the majority of the teachers were high school graduates whose lacked experience of professional trainings. It consequently affected to their pedagogical skills, particularly in constructing kinaesthetic and music learning activities.

Regarding to the findings, some suggestions can be drawn. First, the teachers are expected to further improve their pedagogical skills, particularly related to the dynamic changes of curriculum. They are expected to be ready and able in implementing the content of the curriculum to the classroom practices. Second, the teachers should improve their pedagogical competence by actively involving themselves in various workshops and other professional development programs.

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